Bengaluru Sunday, November 23, 2025 Pages 20 Vol 78 No 323 ₹8

DH on Sunday

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**Head sends England spinning down**

Makeshift opener slams ton as Australia go 1-0 up

P10

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**Berlin vibes**

Thirty five years after reunification, the German capital retains its youthful spirit while also not forgetting its past

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**Experimenting with chaos**

Celebrated multimedia artist Raghava K K delves into the role of artists in a digital artscape driven by AI

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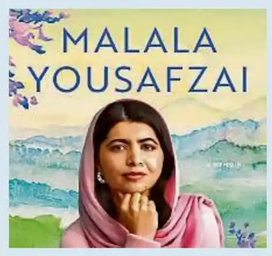



**The Malala memoir**

Love her or hate her, the Pakistani activist presents herself as a formidable young woman full of conviction

**Food & Drink** *Page17*

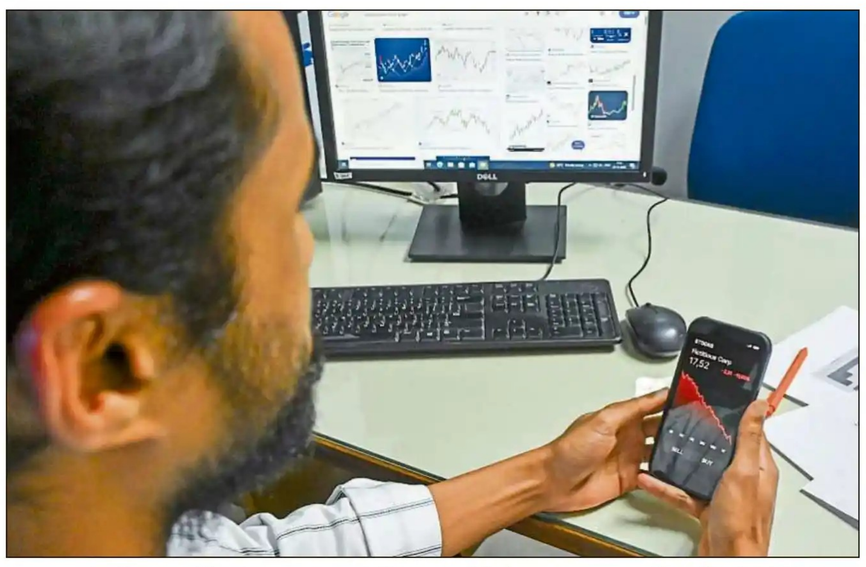
**Staying mindful**

Whether it's making small batches of treats at home or sourcing produce locally, pay attention to your festive indulgence

# Young investors dive into markets, blind to big risks

## A surge in retail trading and the shift away from traditional savings are exposing households and the economy to new vulnerabilities

**GYANENDRA KESHRI**
NEW DELHI, DHNS



**Indian equities have seen retail ownership increase more than fivefold since March 2020.** DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Gaurav Sharma, who is in his early 40s, started trading directly in the stock market during the Covid lockdown. Initially, he invested Rs 50,000. After a few days, he booked a profit of around Rs 10,000. Gradually, he became a day trader. With just Rs 1 lakh, he was able to buy stocks worth up to Rs 10 lakh. As there was an upward trajectory in the overall market, he was making good profits day after day. On some days, he even booked profits of Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000.

While the general economy was mired in doom and gloom, with job losses and salary cuts dominating the news, the stock markets seemed to be doing well.

"I was spending 10-12 hours every day at work. In the stock market, I was able to earn more money by putting in only a few hours," Gaurav said, explaining how he got attracted to stock market trading. Subsequently, he quit his job to pursue stock trading full time. However, the market cycle reversed after a few months. Day trading started turning negative. Taking cues and tips from some YouTube experts, Gaurav ventured into futures and options (F&O) trading, which is considered more complex and risky.

**INSIGHT**

"Initially, it seemed like a very easy way to earn money. But at times, nothing seemed to work. Net net, I am at a loss. I have stopped trading and taken up a job again," he said.

Hyderabad-based techie Kartik Shankar has a similar story to tell. "During Covid, I had bought a put option for a popular automobile stock. In just a week, my Rs 20,000 became a profit of Rs 2 lakh. That's when I got hooked on options trading," said Kartik.

A put option is a derivative contract, where people trade contracts rather than the stocks, that allows you to lock in a future selling price for a stock by paying a small premium. People buy a put option when they expect a stock's price to fall, because the steeper the fall, the larger the profit. However, if the stock price moves in the opposite direction, they lose the premium.

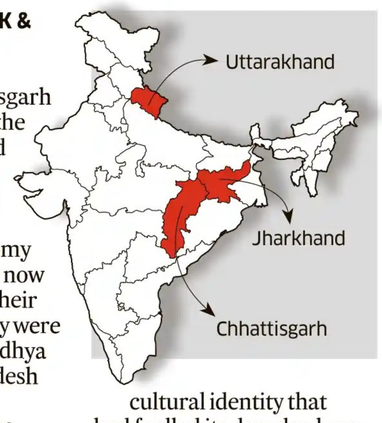
In Kartik's case, his predictions came true at first, making trading a profitable venture for him. But his calculations backfired when he made a high-stakes bet in another case. He ended up losing Rs 4 lakh while trying to rescue a drowning trade position.

Lakhs of individuals, like Gaurav and Kartik, bet their money on futures and options, hoping to make quick profits. Data indicates that some succeed, but many end up losing money.

▸ Equity boom, Page 2

# The case and caution for smaller states

**JISU KETAN PATTANAIK & SUMIT KUMAR SINGH**




Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand, the three states formed in November 2000 in response to longstanding regional demands for recognition, autonomy and development, have now completed 25 years of their political existence. They were carved out of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh respectively.

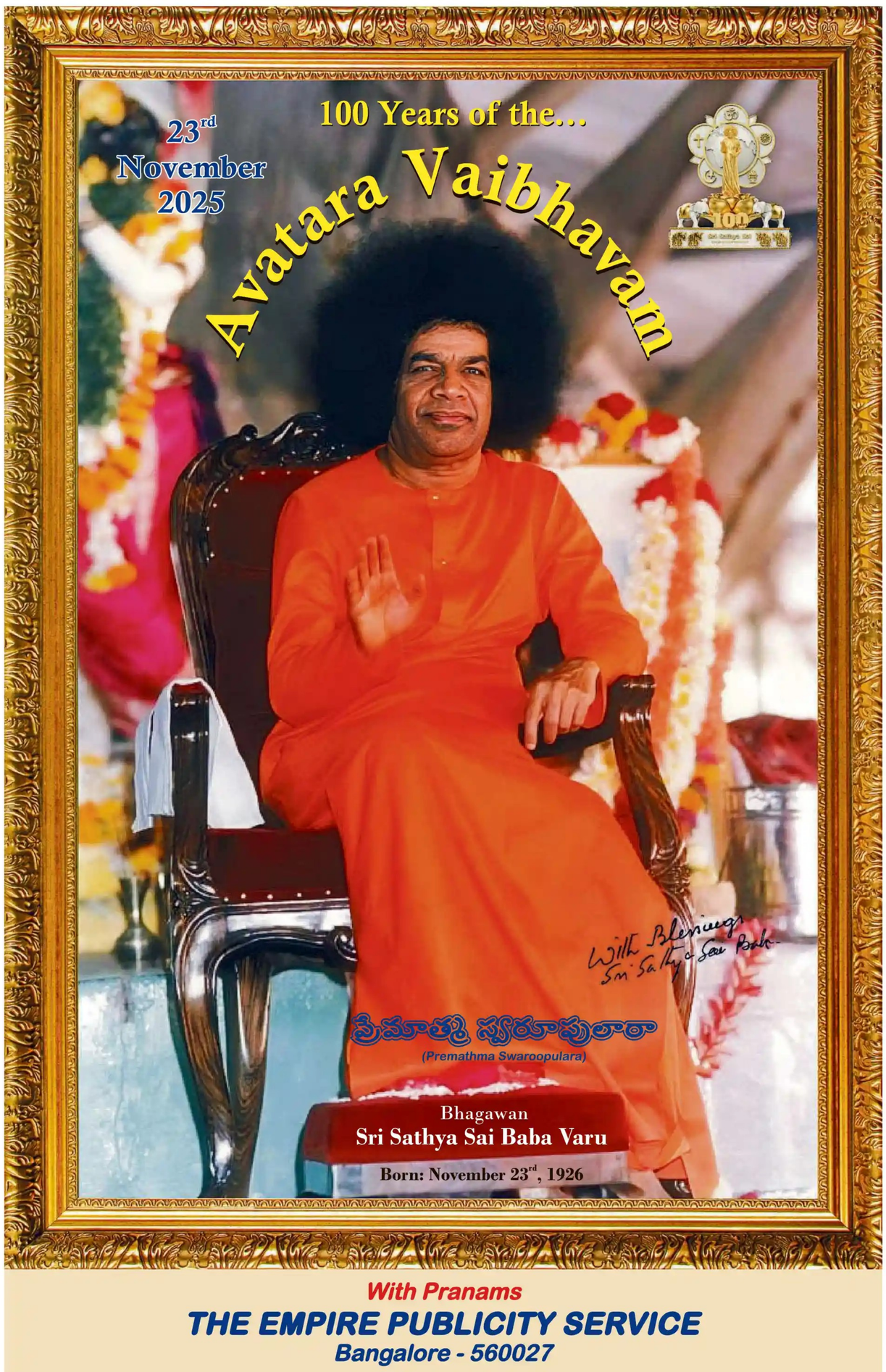
The trajectories of the three states offer a lens to assess whether the argument for smaller states has held up — whether political aspirations have been met, development goals realised and if India may again contemplate reorganising its administrative map.

**The SUNDAY STORY**

Jharkhand entered statehood with some inherent benefits: rich mineral reserves, manufacturing potential and a robust tribal cultural identity that had fuelled its decades-long autonomy movement. But its path has been discordant. Though the state economy has been expanding, its growth rate (about 5.1% in real GSDP from 2012-13 to 2021-22) has been below the national average of 5.6%.

This growth, largely driven by mining and steel production, has failed to translate into social development. As a result, the indicators of human development are lower than the national standards. And the very tribal communities whose political mobilisation drove the demand for statehood often find themselves excluded from the gains of economic growth.

▸ Smaller states, Page 2



us on
GEF INDIA
Better Products. Better Life.
Less oil in the food,
not in the pack.
1000
800
600
400
Freedom
Refined Sunflower Oil
0.910
SOME
REFINED SUNFLOWER OIL
0.800
1L = 910 grams
Freedom Sunflower Oil
As per the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Govt. of India, every 1L packet of Sunflower Oil must weigh 910 grams. However, many packets in the market may look just like a 1L packet, but contain less oil.
Trust Freedom to deliver the right quantity in each and every packet.
Freedom
Refined Sunflower Oil
R K SWAMY 05112025
Net Quantity – 1 Litre equivalent to 910g is as per legal Metrology SOP Ref. No. 1-10/27/2021 – W&M 27 dated 29.12.2023 Clause 4(1)(a).
• Apart from using healthy cooking oil, Freedom recommends regular exercise & balanced diet for good health • For exciting recipes, please visit www.freedomhealthyoil.com

# The perils of excessive financialisation

Equity boom, from Page 1

According to a report released by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) recently, over 91% of individual traders in the equity derivatives segment incurred losses during the financial year 2024-25. A similar trend was witnessed in previous years as well.

Around 93% of over one crore individual equity F&O traders incurred average losses of around Rs 2 lakh per trader (inclusive of transaction costs) during the three years from FY22 to FY24. Out of these, around four lakh traders or top 3.5% of loss-makers incurred an average loss of Rs 28 lakh each, while only 1% of individual traders managed to earn profits exceeding Rs one lakh.

Aggregate losses of individual traders during the three year period from FY22 to FY24 stood at over Rs 1.8 lakh crore. In the financial year that ended in March 2025, individual traders lost around Rs 1.05 lakh crore. The losses have been widening over the years. It rose from Rs 74,812 crore in 2023-24 to around Rs one lakh crore in 2024-25, as per SEBI data.

The income profile shows that most people losing money are from middle- and lower-middle-income families. Over 75% of individual F&O traders in FY24 had declared an annual income of less than Rs 5 lakh.

Despite consecutive years of losses, more than 75% of the loss-making traders continued trading in F&O during FY24, SEBI data showed.

## Surge in retail participation

There has been a significant increase in retail investor participation in the Indian equity markets, especially after the Covid period. The number of demat accounts has more than quadrupled, rising from 4.1 crore in March 2020 to over 21 crore in October 2025. A demat account is used to hold shares and securities in an electronic (dematerialised) format. It is mandatory for stock market participation. Before dematerialisation, stock trading involved the use of physical share certificates. This system was slow, paper-intensive, and risky.

"If you look at the last five years, retail participation in Indian equities hasn't just increased, it has transformed. Markets that once felt distant, complicated and dominated by institutions suddenly became accessible to everyone with a smartphone. Low-cost brokers, instant KYC, UPI-based payments and simple interfaces have removed almost every barrier that existed earlier," said Nikunj Saraf, CEO of wealth management firm Choice Wealth.

But technology alone doesn't explain the wave. The Covid period seems to have created a once-in-a-generation behavioural shift. People were indoors, incomes were relatively stable for many, savings went up, and markets bounced sharply after the March 2020 fall. "For the first time, lakhs of people could see wealth creation in real time — and that changed everything," Saraf said.

Ravi Singh, Chief Research Officer at Master Capital Services Ltd, said the surge in retail participation in the equity markets is because of a "mix of convenience, curiosity and the hope of better returns."

"During Covid, there were very few other investment options giving decent returns, so markets naturally pulled investors in. Younger people see stocks as a way to grow money faster than FDs or real estate. Cheap brokerage, constant market content on social media and the sense that everyone is trading have only driven participation higher," Singh said.

There is a more than five-fold increase in retail ownership in the Indian equities since March 2020. Individuals investing directly in the stock market or through mutual funds now own 18.5% of the over Rs 45 lakh crore Indian equity market.

The market capitalisation of all listed companies on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) is now over one-and-a-half times of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). The ratio climbed from around 56% in March 2020 to a peak of 154% in September 2024, when the key indices like Sensex of the BSE and Nifty of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) hit their respective record highs.

The total assets under management (AUM) of the Indian mutual fund industry have increased by around Rs 50 lakh crore over the past five years.

"Seamless digital onboarding, abundant liquidity and the perception of quick profits have made equity markets, particularly the derivatives segment, appealing to younger participants," said Prashanth Tapse, senior vice president at Mehta Equities.

However, this influx has not been matched by adequate financial literacy, leading many investors to engage in high-risk, speculative strategies without fully understanding their complexities. SEBI has highlighted that this gap between access and awareness has contributed to the disproportionately high loss ratios observed among retail derivative traders, Tapse added.

## Over-financialisation

Low transaction costs and the flow of capital into innovative and risky economic activities are considered key characteristics of a developed financial system. India has made considerable progress in recent years in these areas. The financial sector plays a crucial role in economic growth. However, empirical evidence shows that excessive growth of financial markets can be counterproductive to the real economy. The global financial crisis in 2008 is a good case in point.

The Economic Survey 2024-25 has also cautioned against excessive financialisation saying it can hurt the economy. "The financial markets must grow in line with, but not faster than, the economy's capital needs and overall economic growth. As the country undergoes this significant transformation, it is crucial to be aware of the potential vulnerabilities that may arise," the document tabled in parliament by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman noted.

Uday Kotak, founder and director of Kotak Mahindra Bank, has also flagged the risk of over-financialisation saying over-reliance on financial instruments could potentially harm the economy. "Should we continue encouraging retail investors to keep buying? Money from individuals from Lucknow to Coimbatore is flowing to Boston and Tokyo," he said at Kotak Institutional Equities' investor conference in February.

When the economy reaches a state of over-finance, the financial sector starts competing with the real sector for resources. This competition for resources is especially seen in the case of skilled labour, which gets absorbed into the financial sector at the cost of the real economy, the Economic Survey noted.

## Impact on bank deposits

There has been a marked shift in household savings, away from traditional bank deposits. The share of household deposits in total bank deposits fell to 60% in 2024-25 from 64% in 2019-20. Non-financial corporations filled this gap. In term deposits (TDs) category, the share of households has decreased from 58% to 54% during this five year period.

"This shift has implications for deposit stability and costs, as corporate depositors tend to be more rate sensitive and prefer shorter tenures," said Subha Sri Narayanan, Director, Crisil Ratings.

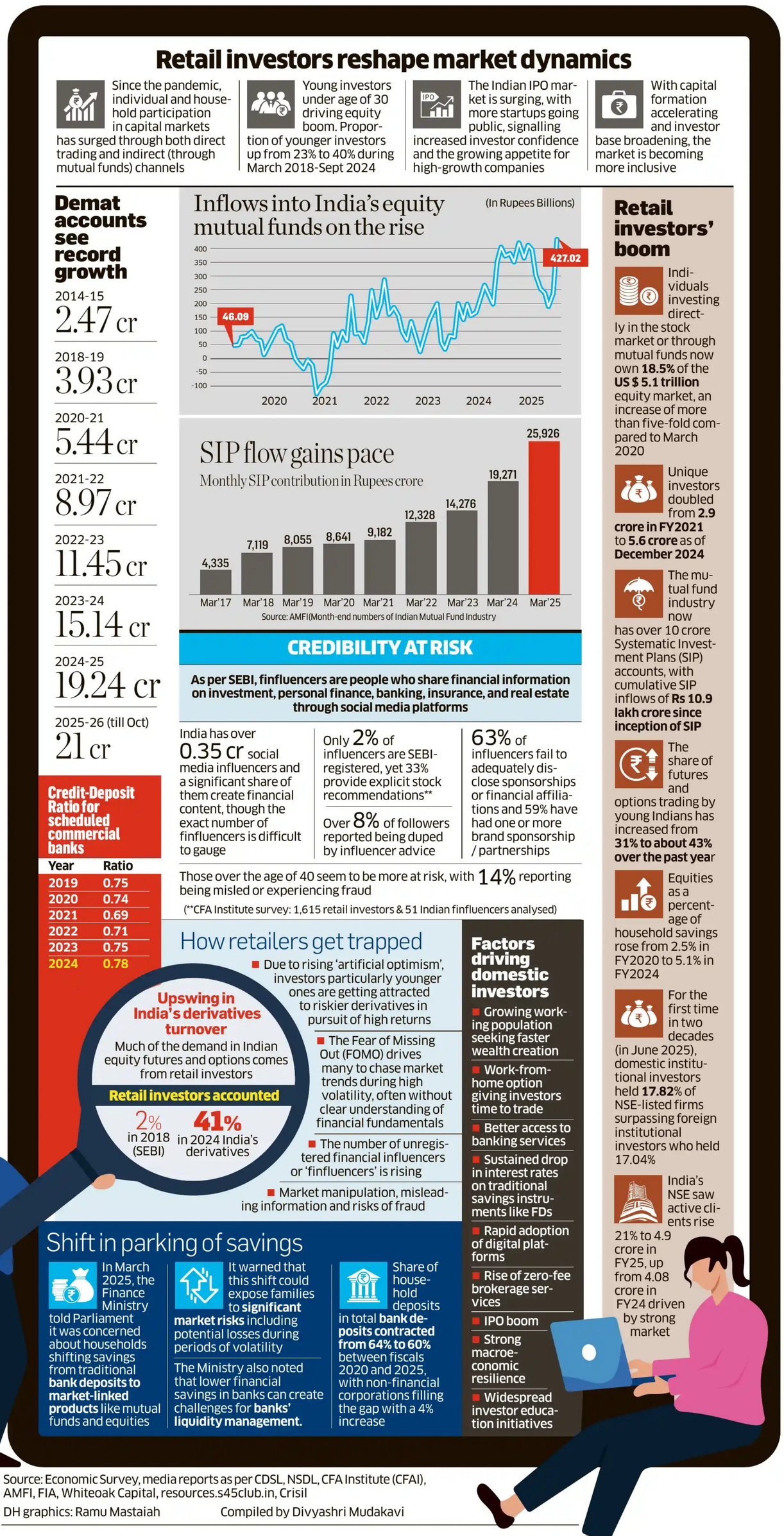
"During periods of tight liquidity, this behaviour can potentially lead to faster deposit outflows and increased funding costs for some banks. Looking ahead, as alternative investments continue to gain popularity, we expect the share of household deposits to decline further," Narayanan said.

The share of low-cost current account and savings account (CASA) deposits ratio fell to 36% as of June 2025, down from a 25-year-high of over 42% in March 2022.

Net financial savings dropped from Rs 23.3 lakh crore in 2020-21 to Rs 17.1 lakh crore in 2021-22 and further to Rs 14.2 lakh crore in 2022-23, as per the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation data.

Household savings have traditionally been the bedrock of India's financial system. The growth and composition of deposits determine the cost of lending and influences the stability of the banking system. India has historically relied on domestic savings to fund infrastructure and other developmental projects. The shift in household savings away from the traditional deposits could make banks more vulnerable and pose significant risks to the economy.

*(With inputs from Shree D N in Bengaluru)*


Retail investors reshape market dynamics
Since the pandemic, individual and household participation in capital markets has surged through both direct trading and indirect (through mutual funds) channels
Young investors under age of 30 driving equity boom. Proportion of younger investors up from 23% to 40% during March 2018-Sept 2024
The Indian IPO market is surging, with more startups going public, signalling increased investor confidence and the growing appetite for high-growth companies
With capital formation accelerating and investor base broadening, the market is becoming more inclusive
Demat accounts see record growth
2014-15 2.47 cr
2018-19 3.93 cr
2020-21 5.44 cr
2021-22 8.97 cr
2022-23 11.45 cr
2023-24 15.14 cr
2024-25 19.24 cr
2025-26 (till Oct) 21 cr
Inflows into India's equity mutual funds on the rise
(In Rupees Billions)
46.09
427.02
2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025
SIP flow gains pace
Monthly SIP contribution in Rupees crore
4,335 7,119 8,055 8,641 9,182 12,328 14,276 19,271 25,926
Mar'17 Mar'18 Mar'19 Mar'20 Mar'21 Mar'22 Mar'23 Mar'24 Mar'25
Source: AMFI(Month-end numbers of Indian Mutual Fund Industry
Retail investors' boom
Individuals investing directly in the stock market or through mutual funds now own 18.5% of the US $ 5.1 trillion equity market, an increase of more than five-fold compared to March 2020
Unique investors doubled from 2.9 crore in FY2021 to 5.6 crore as of December 2024
The mutual fund industry now has over 10 crore Systematic Investment Plans (SIP) accounts, with cumulative SIP inflows of Rs 10.9 lakh crore since inception of SIP
The share of futures and options trading by young Indians has increased from 31% to about 43% over the past year
Equities as a percentage of household savings rose from 2.5% in FY2020 to 5.1% in FY2024
For the first time in two decades (in June 2025), domestic institutional investors held 17.82% of NSE-listed firms surpassing foreign institutional investors who held 17.04%
India's NSE saw active clients rise 21% to 4.9 crore in FY25, up from 4.08 crore in FY24 driven by strong market
CREDIBILITY AT RISK
As per SEBI, finfluencers are people who share financial information on investment, personal finance, banking, insurance, and real estate through social media platforms
India has over 0.35 cr social media influencers and a significant share of them create financial content, though the exact number of finfluencers is difficult to gauge
Only 2% of influencers are SEBI-registered, yet 33% provide explicit stock recommendations**
Over 8% of followers reported being duped by influencer advice
63% of influencers fail to adequately disclose sponsorships or financial affiliations and 59% have had one or more brand sponsorship / partnerships
Those over the age of 40 seem to be more at risk, with 14% reporting being misled or experiencing fraud
(**CFA Institute survey: 1,615 retail investors & 51 Indian finfluencers analysed)
Credit-Deposit Ratio for scheduled commercial banks
Year Ratio
2019 0.75
2020 0.74
2021 0.69
2022 0.71
2023 0.75
2024 0.78
Upswing in India's derivatives turnover
Much of the demand in Indian equity futures and options comes from retail investors
Retail investors accounted
2% in 2018 (SEBI)
41% in 2024 India's derivatives
How retailers get trapped
Due to rising 'artificial optimism', investors particularly younger ones are getting attracted to riskier derivatives in pursuit of high returns
The Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) drives many to chase market trends during high volatility, often without clear understanding of financial fundamentals
The number of unregistered financial influencers or 'finfluencers' is rising
Market manipulation, misleading information and risks of fraud
Shift in parking of savings
In March 2025, the Finance Ministry told Parliament it was concerned about households shifting savings from traditional bank deposits to market-linked products like mutual funds and equities
It warned that this shift could expose families to significant market risks including potential losses during periods of volatility
The Ministry also noted that lower financial savings in banks can create challenges for banks' liquidity management.
Share of household deposits in total bank deposits contracted from 64% to 60% between fiscals 2020 and 2025, with non-financial corporations filling the gap with a 4% increase
Factors driving domestic investors
Growing working population seeking faster wealth creation
Work-from-home option giving investors time to trade
Better access to banking services
Sustained drop in interest rates on traditional savings instruments like FDs
Rapid adoption of digital platforms
Rise of zero-fee brokerage services
IPO boom
Strong macroeconomic resilience
Widespread investor education initiatives

Source: Economic Survey, media reports as per CDSL, NSDL, CFA Institute (CFAI), AMFI, FIA, Whiteoak Capital, resources.s45club.in, Crisil

DH graphics: Ramu Mastaiah Compiled by Divyashri Mudakavi

# Unregulated 'finfluencers' spark concern

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Financial influencers or finfluencers, who share tips and views on a range of financial topics through social media, have significantly reshaped today's investment landscape. By breaking down intimidating financial jargons into engaging and easy-to-understand content, they have improved financial literacy and encouraged several young investors to venture into stocks and derivatives trading.

However, this digital democratisation of financial information has also exposed investors to greater risks of fraud, misinformation and manipulation.

Take the case of Mumbai-based dentist Pavan (name changed), who subscribed to an algorithmic trading course (which helps understand trading strategies) after a 'finfluencer' promised high returns. The platform claimed it could identify profitable options trades and even execute them automatically. In the back-testing, Pavan saw 50% profit and subsequently, he paid Rs 40,000 for the service. But once he joined, the broker's staff stopped responding to his calls and the system repeatedly hit stop-losses. Within a month, he had lost over Rs 1 lakh.

Like Pavan, hundreds of thousands have lost money due to manipulative or half-baked information circulated on social media.

"There are different types of market influencers. Some give objective market analysis and genuine insights. But many are simply out to make money by enticing potential investors into speculation and risky areas like futures and options trading," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments Limited. "Finfluencers should be subject to more regulation," he added.

Financial influencers often operate in domains overseen by multiple regulators including the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA). Under SEBI rules, making explicit or implied claims about returns or performance on any security without the regulator's approval is illegal. SEBI also prohibits any person or entity from offering stock-specific recommendations or advice, directly or indirectly, without proper registration. Yet most financial influencers are not registered with SEBI and not permitted under any regulation to offer stock market advice.

"Some influencers genuinely try to explain concepts, but many highlight only the exciting parts of trading," said Ravi Singh, Chief Research Officer at Master Capital Services. "This creates the illusion that anyone can make money in derivatives with a few tricks. That perception drives retail participation. In reality, derivatives require proper knowledge and discipline."

Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP and Research Analyst at Mehta Equities, also called for stronger and structured regulations for influencers. He suggested that financial influencers be required to obtain National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM)-level certification and register with SEBI to ensure accountability and investor protection.

## Have your say

**To express your opinion, e-mail us at: insight@deccanherald.co.in**

Smaller states, from Page 1

# Reorganisation of states requires a clear framework

Mining-induced displacement, unresolved land rights and environmental degradation remain characteristic of the lived experience of many communities.

Frequent government changes, fragile coalitions and corruption scandals have undermined long-term policymaking, while administrative inefficiencies have limited the state's ability to convert its natural wealth into sustained human development. The expectation of stronger tribal representation and real empowerment, too, remains largely unfulfilled.

Chhattisgarh presents a more balanced yet complex picture.

It began its journey as one of India's least developed regions, predominantly rural and with an impressive tribal population. Over the past quarter-century, it has made considerable gains in health, education, infrastructure and welfare sectors.

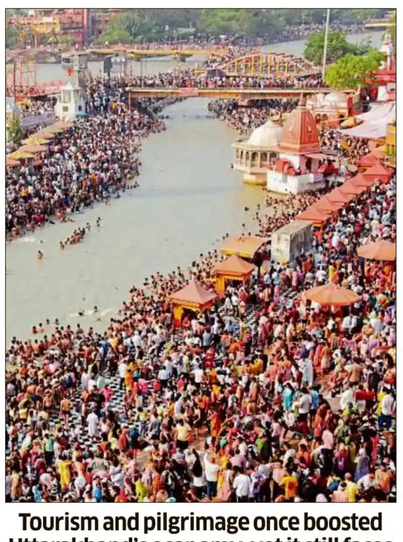
Some of its initiatives, from reforms in the public distribution system to innovations in rural healthcare and programmes to enhance school enrolments, went on to become national models. Cities such as Raipur and Nava Raipur are among the top cities in the chart of planned development, indicating the benefits of a specific administrative focus. But development has not been even across the state.

Crucially, Chhattisgarh's progress has unfolded against the backdrop of a prolonged Maoist insurgency. The regions of Bastar, Dantewada and Sukma became centres of Left-wing extremism, triggering prolonged military actions, large-scale displacement and derailment of local life. The statehood did help provide a more focused administrative response to conflict and development, but it alone could not respond to historical deprivation. Despite challenges, Chhattisgarh fares better than the other two states in terms of the developmental dividends that smaller states can offer, aided by a relatively stable governance and purposeful leadership.

## Aspirations and contradictions

Unlike the other two states, Uttarakhand's creation was rooted in questions of geography, demography and cultural identity. For years, the Himalayan districts of undivided Uttar Pradesh remained neglected by a distant political centre in Lucknow. Statehood was viewed as a remedy to administrative alienation.

In the early years, Uttarakhand registered high achievements in the areas of literacy, connectivity and industrial development, more so in the districts of Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar. Tourism and pilgrimage, focused on destinations such as Kedarnath and Badrinath, were big economic boosters. The hydropower projects were expected to bring revenue and electricity. But the state's development story has been far more uneven. The hill districts are still facing the challenge of outmigration, lack of employment opportunities, weak infrastructure and environmental vulnerability. Industrial development, which is concentrated in urban centres, does not seem to have brought livelihood security in rural areas.



Tourism and pilgrimage once boosted Uttarakhand's economy, yet it still faces outmigration, job scarcity, weak infrastructure and environmental risks. In pic, devotees take a dip in the Ganga at Haridwar. PTI

Uttarakhand's development model has repeatedly come into conflict with the region's ecological realities. The expansion of hydropower projects, unregulated tourism and rapid infrastructure development have all increased the region's vulnerability to natural disasters. While statehood has given the people a stronger political voice, it has also exposed the limits of a development strategy that fails to factor in environmental realities.

## Beyond size

The key question across these three states is, did the creation of smaller states fulfil the hopes that led to the reorganisation? The answer is disparate. Smaller states have gained in terms of efficient governance.

While statehood improved tribal representation in Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh and gave hill communities in Uttarakhand a stronger voice, structural challenges have persisted. The states have recorded varying levels of economic performance and all continue to grapple with regional imbalances within their borders.

In the backdrop of the experiences of these three states, should India consider division of its large states? There are some reasons in favour of such a move. A significant one is administrative efficiency: states such as Uttar Pradesh, with a population of over 240 million, are just too large to be efficiently governed. The regional identities remain strong in states like Maharashtra, Rajasthan and West Bengal, where many regions feel overshadowed by dominant political centres. Smaller states can also enable more focused development policies. This could strengthen democratic representation through a more balanced federal structure, one in which political power is less concentrated.

However, there are compelling arguments against further fragmentation. Many regions are unable to maintain statehood without significant central transfer. Partisan interests are more likely to drive demands for new states, often overshadowing the real developmental needs. An increase in the number of states could also intensify competition over resources such as land and water. Developments over the past 25 years show that the benefits of smaller states are not organic but conditional and highly dependent on the quality of the government, political stability and development policy.

While India may contemplate further reorganisation, such a move would require a clear framework, one that factors in economic viability, cultural cohesion, ecological and administrative capacity and local aspirations.

As population grows, environmental demands mount and the necessity to improve representation becomes more evident, the size issue ought to be seen as a question of structure, not a question of size. As seen in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand, smaller states can strengthen governance and reinforce regional influence but cannot be a panacea. Their successes and frustrations underscore one important reality: statehood must be coupled with inclusive politics, strong institutions and development schemes that are sensitive to local realities.

*(Jisu Ketan Pattanaik, Assistant Professor of Sociology & Sumit Kumar Singh, Research Assistant and Student at the National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi)*

# Share satellite data with developing world: PM to G20

## Launches India-Canada-Australia tech, innovation partnership

**ANIRBAN BHAUMIK**
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India, Canada and Australia on Saturday launched a new trilateral technology and innovation partnership, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi met his counterparts, Mark Carney and Anthony Albanese, in Johannesburg, where he urged the G20 to start an Open Satellite Data Partnership and a Critical Minerals Circularity Initiative.

He said satellite data and analysis from G20 space agencies can be made "accessible for countries of the Global South". He also proposed a G20 initiative to counter the drug-terror nexus, as well as a global healthcare response team, apart from underlining that it was time to look at new parameters of development, one which would address the imbalance of growth and over-exploitation of nature.

Modi met Carney and Albanese on the sidelines of the G20 summit, which President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa hosted in Johannesburg and which US President Donald Trump boycotted.

The leaders of the three nations announced the launch of the Australia-Canada-India Technology and Innovation Partnership to boost cooperation on critical and emerging technologies, complementing bilateral initiatives.

"The initiative will deepen collaboration between democratic partners across three continents and three oceans in emerging technologies, support diversification of supply chains, clean energy and mass adoption of AI," Modi posted on X after he met Australian and Canadian prime ministers.

"We look forward to working together to guarantee a better future for the coming generations."

The initiative will leverage the natural strengths of the three countries, with an emphasis on green energy innovation and building resilient supply chains, including those for critical minerals.

It will deepen the respective ambition and strategic collaboration towards net zero and drive further diversification of supply chains towards a secure, sustainable, and resilient future, according to a joint statement issued by the three sides.

"The trilateral partnership will also examine development and mass adoption of IA to improve the lives of citizens of the three nations." Officials of the three governments will convene in the first quarter of 2026 to advance the initiative.

Modi addressed the G20 summit and presented six proposals – a Global Traditional Knowledge Repository, a G20-Africa Skills Multiplier Initiative, a Global Healthcare Response Team, a G20 initiative on Countering the Drug-Terror Nexus, a G20 Open Satellite Data Partnership and a G20 Critical Minerals Circularity Initiative.

▸ G20, Page 6

PM Narendra Modi and EAM S Jaishankar at the G20 Leaders' Summit plenary session in Johannesburg on Saturday. AFP

### TRILATERAL THRUST

- Initiative will deepen collaboration in emerging technologies, support diversification of supply chains, clean energy and mass adoption of AI
- Emphasis to be on green energy innovation, building resilient supply chains, including those for critical minerals
- To deepen collaboration towards net zero and drive further diversification of supply chains towards secure, sustainable, and resilient future

> The initiative will deepen collaboration between democratic partners across three continents and three oceans in emerging technologies.
> **Narendra Modi,** Prime Minister

# Cop among 6 held in Rs 7.11-cr ATM van heist case

**MANJUNATH SHETTAR**
BENGALURU, DHNS

The South Division police busted the Rs 7.11-crore ATM cash van heist reported in the city on Wednesday and arrested six persons, including a police constable and an ex-employee of a cash logistics firm.

The total amount recovered was Rs 6.29 crore after around 11 special teams, comprising 200 policemen spread out to Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Goa and tracked the suspects, analysed their routes and examined technical evidence.

Investigation officers said significant planning aimed at evading digital tracking and surveillance went into the heist. They said the tactics were designed to create a "digital vacuum", leaving no recoverable electronic trail.

The arrested are Annappa Naik, a constable attached to Govindapura police station, J Xavier, an ex-employee of cash logistics firm Info Systems and Gopal Prasad alias Gopi, a fleet manager of the logistics firm. Late Saturday, three of their associates Ravi, Naveen and Nelson were detained in Hyderabad. All are aged between 30 and 38 years. All six are from Bengaluru. City police commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh said on Saturday that at 1.20 pm on November 19, CMS Info Systems reported that their van was stopped.

▸ ATM, Page 4B

Naik, police constable

Xavier, ex-CMS staffer

### Daring robbery

- Robbers tried to evade digital tracking and surveillance system
- CMS Info Systems reported that their van was stopped at 1.20 pm on Nov 19 by men impersonating RBI officers
- It was later established that the robbery occurred earlier at 12.48 pm
- The gang forced open the rear compartment of the van, grabbed cash boxes
- While two accused forced security men into their Innova car, another accused boarded the cash van, took the cash box at gunpoint and escaped

# CM meets Kharge, says he'll follow party diktat on tenure

## Siddaramaiah claims it was courtesy meeting; discussed local polls

BENGALURU, DHNS

The leadership-change speculation refused to die down even as Chief Minister Siddaramaiah spent more than an hour meeting Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge late on Saturday night.

This was Siddaramaiah's second meeting with Kharge in less than a week. They met in Delhi earlier this week.

Emerging out of Kharge's Sadashivanagar residence, Siddaramaiah was asked if he had clarity about his tenure as the CM. "My clarity is, whatever the high command decides, I will follow it."

The CM, however, said the buzz on leadership change was "only speculation" and "you (media) created it".

Siddaramaiah said it was a "courtesy" meeting with Kharge. "We discussed party matters. We talked about upcoming elections to zilla panchayats, taluk panchayats and Bengaluru municipalities," he said. He said he did not discuss with Kharge his plan to reshuffle the Cabinet.

Asked why he looked dull, Siddaramaiah said: "I am never dull. Having said that, I am not excessively happy."

On some Congress lawmakers visiting the national capital, Siddaramaiah maintained that all must abide by the high command's decision. "MLAs can go (to Delhi). But ultimately, everyone - leaders, ministers, D K Shivakumar and me - must follow what the high command decides," he said, adding that he would visit Delhi "whenever they call me".

The Congress government completed two-and-a-half years in office on November 20, which also came with signals from Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar that he wants to take the reins of the government. While Siddaramaiah is pushing for a reshuffle of his Cabinet, Shivakumar wants the party to first decide his fate.

CM Siddaramaiah with AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge in Bengaluru on Saturday.

### BYV: DKS not in touch with BJP

**Dismissing reports that Deputy CM D K Shivakumar is in touch with the BJP, the party state president B Y Vijayendra on Saturday said that the BJP is not interested in the Congress internal affairs.** Page 5

# Eight held for kidnapping four call centre staff

**ASHWIN BM**
BENGALURU, DHNS

In a swift operation, the Bengaluru Police on Saturday successfully cracked a high-stakes kidnapping-for-ransom case in Koramangala, rescuing four manager-level employees of a call centre who were abducted in the early hours of the day.

The police have arrested eight persons, seized two vehicles and recovered details pertaining to the digitally extorted sum of Rs 8.90 lakh.

The incident began around 1 am on Saturday when the four male employees of Global Telecom Connect Private Limited were working at their office in Koramangala. A gang of eight intercepted the victims, posing as police officers to forcibly take them down for "detailed verification", before kidnapping them.

The primary motive behind the abduction was financial gain. The accused forced the operation manager, one of the victims, to initiate digital transfers. DCP South-East Sarah Fatima said the gang managed to extort Rs 8.90 lakh via online banking.

▸ Kidnap, Page 6

# Winter Session: Bill on civil N-sector among 10 planned

**SHEMIN JOY**
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Narendra Modi government's plans to introduce a Bill that could change the character of Chandigarh administration during the Winter Session of Parliament has triggered a controversy with AAP, Congress and Akali Dal warning against any "attempt to snatch" Punjab's rights over the city.

While the content of the Bill is not public yet, there is apprehension in Punjab that it may dilute its hold over the Union Territory where its Governor doubles up as the administrator since 1984.

Demand for control over Chandigarh is a contentious issue with Haryana too making a claim over it during bifurcation in 1966, prompting the government to designate the city designed by Le Corbusier as capital to both the states but keeping it a Union Territory.

The argument by the opponents of The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill 2025 is that if the existing arrangement is diluted, Punjab would lose its claim over making Chandigarh its capital exclusively.

Along with this Bill, the Modi government is also planning to bring nine other new Bills seeking to open up the nuclear sector to private players, introduce reforms in higher education as well as those linked to reforms in the insurance sector, securities and easing land acquisition for highways.

The government also intends to pass the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill 2025 and Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill 2025.

▸ Chandigarh, Page 6

# Summit seals climate deal without fossil fuel plan

**BELÉM (BRAZIL), AFP:** Nations sealed a modest deal at the UN climate summit in the Amazon on Saturday, as Europe and others dropped their demands for a plan to phase out fossil fuels after fraught negotiations with oil-producing countries and emerging economies.

Nearly 200 countries approved the deal by consensus after two weeks of COP30 talks in the Brazilian city of Belem, with the notable absence of the United States as President Donald Trump shunned the event.

French ecological transition minister Monique Barbut had accused oil-rich Saudi Arabia and Russia, along with coal producer India and "many" other emerging countries, of refusing language on a fossil-fuel phaseout.

Applause rang out in the plenary session after the head of COP30, Brazilian diplomat Andre Correa do Lago, slammed a gavel signalling its approval following several sleepless nights of negotiations.

The EU and other nations had pushed for a deal that would call for a "roadmap" to phase out fossil fuels, but the words do not appear in the text.

Instead, the agreement calls on countries to voluntarily "accelerate" their climate action and recalls the consensus reached at COP28 in Dubai. That 2023 deal called for the world to transition away from fossil fuels.

The EU, which had warned that the summit could end without a deal if fossil fuels were not addressed, accepted the watered-down language.

"We're not going to hide the fact that we would have preferred to have more, to have more ambition on everything," EU climate commissioner Wopke Hoekstra told reporters.

RELATIONSHIP ISSUE

# Study sheds light on women 'suffering silently'

DH EXCLUSIVE

**SNEHA RAMESH**
BENGALURU, DHNS

Women suffering from vaginismus — a female sexual dysfunction — took an average of 3.23 years after marriage/relationship to seek medical help and around 9% of them suffered from anxiety or depression, according to a research conducted in five cities across the country.

The research, published in the Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of India, has revealed that 9.2% of women with vaginismus were suffering from anxiety and 8.6% of them were depressed.

Vaginismus is a condition that makes sexual intercourse difficult, owing to fear of pain and involuntary contraction of pelvic muscles. As a result, 30.9% of those who reported it were unable to have sex, and in many cases, this had an impact on their relationships and family.

"Many of them did report interpersonal relationship issues. It was either that personal issues caused vaginismus or the condition triggered personal issues. We could not determine which caused the other," Dr Aishwarya Rao, one of the authors of the research, told *DH*.

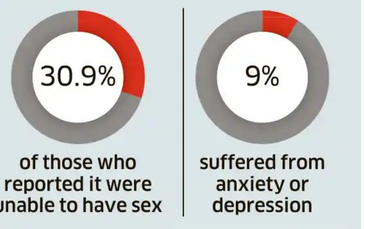
A lack of awareness among women and their partners has meant that many women suffer silently. "Since the awareness is low, many women had suffered silently before they sought treatment. The fear in a few of them was so high that anything penetrative could trigger anxiety. Even a check up by a gynaecologist would have been difficult," explained Dr Sandip Deshpande, co-author of the research paper.

The research pointed out that the women with this condition took a mean time of 3.23 years after their marriage/relationship to approach a professional therapist. "The majority of the participants were from Tier 1 cities, had been married or living together, had tried sexual intercourse previously but had never been successful," the paper said.

▸ Sexual dysfunction, Page 6

### Intimate health

- **Vaginismus:** A condition that makes sexual intercourse difficult
- This could be owing to fear of pain and involuntary contraction of pelvic muscles



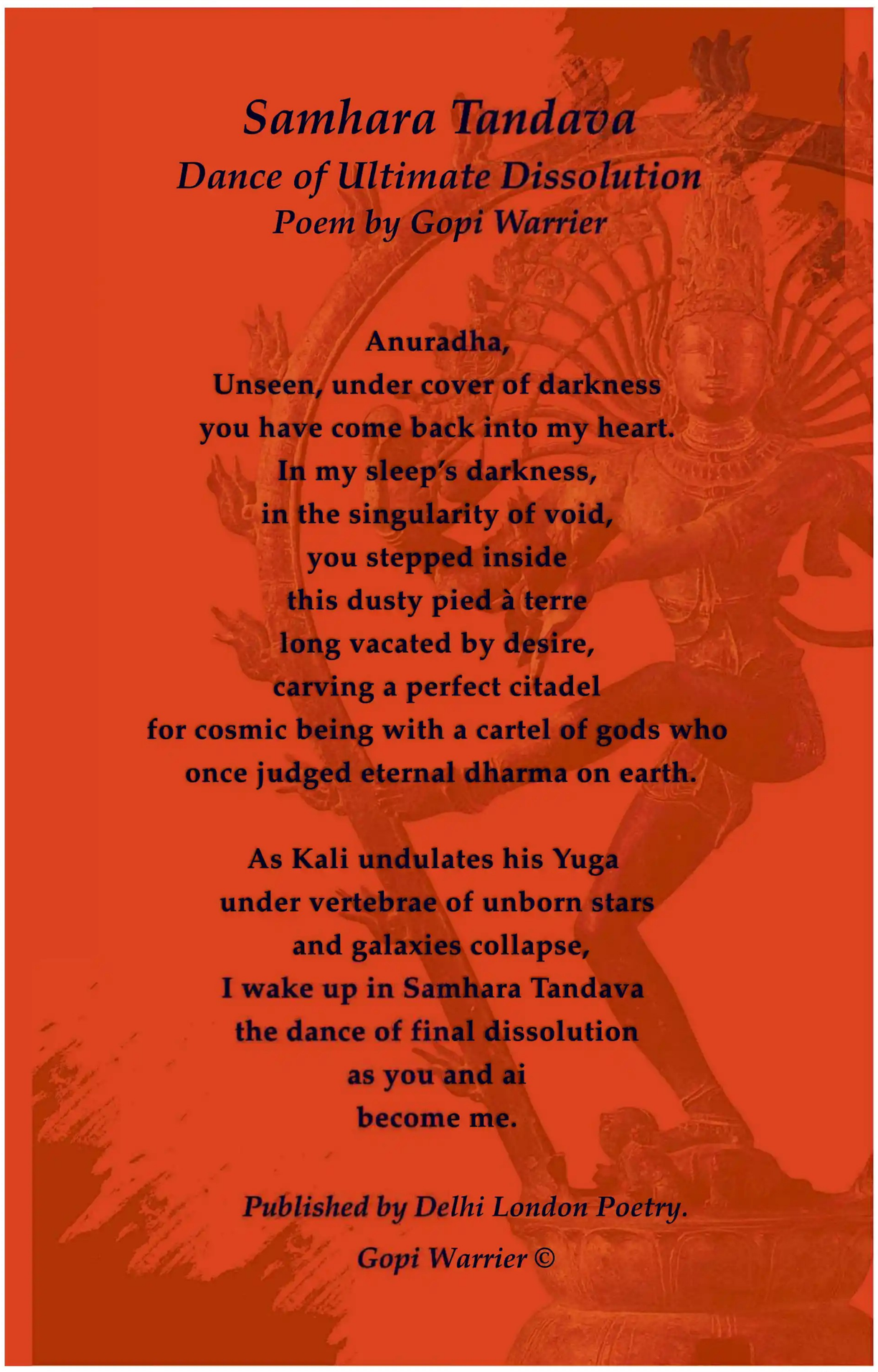

- It took an average 3.23 years for patients to seek medical help

# Cong forms panel for DMK seat talks

**CHENNAI, DHNS:** The Congress has constituted a five-member committee to hold talks with the ruling DMK on the modalities of the electoral understanding, including seat-sharing, for the 2026 Assembly polls.

The committee will be chaired by Girish Raya Chodankar, AICC in-charge for TN and Puducherry. It was constituted after the DMK leadership sought clarity on the alliance between the two parties from the Congress High Command.

The development comes close on the heels of speculation that the Congress cadres want an alliance with TVK of actor Vijay. Page 7


Samhara Tandava
Dance of Ultimate Dissolution
Poem by Gopi Warrier
Anuradha,
Unseen, under cover of darkness
you have come back into my heart.
In my sleep's darkness,
in the singularity of void,
you stepped inside
this dusty pied à terre
long vacated by desire,
carving a perfect citadel
for cosmic being with a cartel of gods who
once judged eternal dharma on earth.
As Kali undulates his Yuga
under vertebrae of unborn stars
and galaxies collapse,
I wake up in Samhara Tandava
the dance of final dissolution
as you and ai
become me.
Published by Delhi London Poetry.
Gopi Warrier ©

**CANINE CRISIS** With space running out, GBA scrambles for solutions

# Bengaluru, a city of strays and too few shelters

**SNEHA RAMESH**
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Supreme Court recently directed that all stray dogs in public spaces such as hospitals, schools, colleges, and parks must be shifted into shelters. While the SC is speaking about shifting a large number of dogs to shelters, Bengaluru is not equipped to house even a few hundred dogs to carry out Animal Birth Control (ABC) on a large scale.

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) is now scouting for places to set up new dog pounds and is also planning a slew of initiatives to bring down the rate of dog bites in the city. "Our first priority is to set up more centres to house the dogs, and instructions have been given to all the corporations," Maheshwar Rao, GBA Commissioner, told *DH*.

At present, there are close to eight centres where Animal Birth Control (ABC) programs are being conducted, and a few other observation centres. However, Rao acknowledged that a lack of space had slowed down the ABC progress, and the authority has now requested support from the public.

"If anyone can provide us space to set up observation centres to house dogs, we can go ahead immediately. Our officials are also trying to scout suitable places," he said.

The corporation commissioners have also asked officials to conduct a survey and identify the dogs that need to be shifted so that they can plan and set up the infrastructure required to house them.

The officials have written to all institutions asking them about the number of dogs on their premises, based on which further actions would be planned.

While the GBA is now planning better infrastructure and new initiatives, many initiatives floated earlier have remained on paper.

Earlier, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had announced a number of measures to reduce the stray dog menace and improve the coverage of the ABC program that helps keep a check on the stray dog population.

From microchipping the strays to track them and identify if they are neutered to community feeding initiatives that could help bring down aggressive behaviour among the dogs, the BBMP had announced a slew of measures. However, none of them have taken off.

Microchip technology is capable of storing the dog's place of residence, date of vaccination, date of neutering surgery, and other factors. The community feeding initiative aimed at feeding stray dogs regularly. Feeding them would help bring down the aggressiveness in them, the officials had opined.

"The tenders did not receive a good response. Though we invited tenders twice, we could not get a qualified agency to take up these works. Now, the individual corporations will take over," a senior GBA official said.

Rao acknowledged that many of these programs had hit the back burner after the GBA and five corporations took over from BBMP.

"These programs did take a back seat. However, our first priority is to implement the SC order and improve our infrastructure. We will eventually take these up based on priority," he said.

**WHAT'S ROLLING OUT NEXT?**
- To set up new dog pounds
- To improve coverage of animal birth control and vaccination

**MEASURES AWAITING ROLLOUT**
- Microchipping
- Five-in-one vaccines
- Community feeding programmes

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) is now scouting for locations to set up new dog pounds and planning a slew of initiatives to bring down the rate of dog bites in the city. DH FILE PHOTO

## No changes on ground

Over the last three months, the city has reported at least three incidents of dog bites and one incident of death due to a dog bite. However, even after back-to-back incidents, there seems to be no impact on the ground, and residents say they still go out in fear of being hounded by packs of dogs.

*DH* spoke to people from various corporations to understand if any action is taken after a dog bite incident is reported from a particular area.

"The dogs in the areas are caught and kept under observation. Many of the dogs are released back soon after testing them and checking if they are neutered. Aggressive dogs are kept for ten days," an official from the South Corporation said.

In the North Corporation, recently, at least 40 dogs were captured after back-to-back incidents of dog bites. Asked what the dogs were analysed for, officials said that they did not exactly know how to bring down the aggressiveness of the dogs.

"We neuter them, and the hormonal changes make them a little aggressive. That apart, we are not sure what else can be done. Earlier, there were behavioural therapists who used to visit and help us understand the behaviour of the dogs. Now, however, we just try various methods we know. It's a trial-and-error method. Many times, we just keep them under observation for 10 days and let them back," the official said on condition of anonymity.

# Kannada activists push bilingual policy, local jobs

**Groups rally with 12-point charter of demands**

BENGALURU, DHNS

Hundreds of activists and members of various pro-Kannada organisations gathered at Freedom Park on Saturday for the Kannadigas' Demand Conference. The event, led by veteran pro-Kannada activist Janagere Venkataramaiah, was organised to protest the state government's perceived inaction in implementing measures to protect the interests of Kannada, Kannadigas, and Karnataka.

Addressing the large gathering, Venkataramaiah presented a 12-point charter of demands. A central focus was the immediate implementation of a "Bilingual Policy" within November, making Kannada a mandatory language in the State's education system starting from the next academic year. He emphasised the need to upgrade government Kannada-medium schools and introduce special grace points and reservation in state government jobs for those who have studied in Kannada medium up to the tenth standard.

On the economic front, the activist strongly demanded a "Local Employment Guarantee Act" to mandate the reservation of 80% of all jobs in Karnataka for Kannadigas. This was paired with a call for the state government to immediately fill the estimated three lakh vacant government posts to address rising youth unemployment. He also urged the Union government to formulate a "National Employment Policy" to fix state-wise reservation in all Union government jobs, including railways and banks.

In matters of federal policy and infrastructure, Venkataramaiah reiterated the "Our Water, Our Right" principle, demanding immediate plans to fully utilise the state's rightful share of water from inter-state rivers like the Cauvery, Krishna, and Mahadayi, alongside speedy resolution of pending court disputes.

Other key demands included pressuring the Centre to establish the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Raichur, establishing a Supreme Court Divisional Court in Bengaluru, and securing the posthumous 'Bharat Ratna' award for Rashtrakavi Kuvempu.

Kannada activists raise slogan during the protest rally at Freedom Park in the city on Saturday.

## ◆ IN THE CITY ◆

**GENERAL**

**Kannada Saurabha, Book Release of 'Dr Doddarangegowda's Comprehensive Literature' edited by N Balaji Rao:** Inauguration: Doddarangegowda: Shudra Srinivas, L Hanumanthaiyya, Girija Lokesh to be present: Saurabha Foundation: Ashwath Kalabhavan, N R Colony; 4 pm

**T Venkateshamurthy Memorial Lecture on 'Methods for instilling scientific spirit in young minds in the community':** Narendra Nayak: Lakshmi Chandrashekhar: B R Manjunath: Kali Kalisu, Community: Dr H N Multimedia Hall, National College, Jayanagar; 10.30 am

**Malleswaram Ratna Award:** Shobha Karandlaje, Dr C N Ashwathanarayana, Award Recipients: D Suresh Gowda, Hemlata Satish Shetty, K Ganesh Rao Kesarkar, Shama Krishna: Malleshwaram 5K Run Foundation: Ubhayavedanta Pravartana Sabha, 10th Cross Road, Malleswaram; 7 pm

**M C Krishnamurthy's 'Yajnavalkya Maharshi' book release:** Shankar Bhat N Joshi: Yajnavalkya Granth Pratishthan: Sri Brahma Chaitanya Mandir, 16th Main Road, Banashankari, First Stage; 4.30 pm

**'Narayana Guru' Award Presentation:** Inauguration: KV Prabhakar, Award Presentation: Belur Gopalakrishna: Karnataka Backward Classes Recognised Editors and Reporters Association: Green Path Hotel, Seshadripuram; 11 am

**CULTURAL**

**'Matte mukya mantri' play performance, book release:** H C Mahadevappa: YSV Datta: L Hanumanthayya, G Ramakrishna, Starring: 'Mukyamantri' Chandru: Kala Gangotri: Ravindra Kalakshetra, JC Road; 5.30 pm

**Karnataka Music Concert:** Vocals: Aishwarya Mahesh, Venue: Band Stand, Cubbon Park; 7 am

## ◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

**FORECAST**
Generally cloudy sky with Light rain

**TEMPERATURES**

| | |
|---|---|
| Maximum | 27.3°C |
| Minimum | 29.2°C |
| Rainfall (as of 8:30 am) | -- |
| Humidity (as of 5:30 pm) | 75% |
| Sunset (Nov 23) | 5:50 pm |
| Sunrise (Nov 24) | 6:21 am |
| Moonrise | 7:58 am |
| Moonset | 7:24 pm |

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

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DH INTERVIEW

# Restructuring committee studying new areas to be added to GBA limits: B S Patil

**SNEHA RAMESH**
BENGALURU, DHNS

As the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) takes over governance of the city, *DH* speaks to B S Patil, former chief secretary and head of the committee that drafted the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act, about how it is being implemented and the future work by the committee.

Excerpts:

**Now that the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act has been approved and is in force, what is the feedback you have received and how is it working on ground?**
There is very positive feedback both from the citizens as well as from the officials on the new governance model which has come into effect recently. We are very confident that the Government, which has brought the new Act into force after extensive deliberation, is bound to be efficient and citizen-friendly.

B S Patil, Former Chief Secretary of Karnataka

**Have you been consulted about adding new areas to GBA limits? What work is going on with the committee?**
Yes. The Government has directed us to submit a detailed report after extensive consultation with the people's representatives and other local authorities on the potential areas adjacent to the Greater Bengaluru Area which can be further included in GBA. The Committee has just received the direction, and we have started working on it.

**There have been multiple petitions filed in the High Court challenging GBA. How do you defend GBA?**
The matter is sub judice. Hence, no comments.

**The current law provides much scope for the MLAs – they are in the GBA, corporations and chair an assembly constituency-level coordination committee. There are concerns that this will snatch powers away from councillors?**
No. The MLAs in the GBA will only be chairing their constituency-level coordination of municipal activities that are being proposed and implemented in their respective constituencies. The MLA is responsible for the welfare of his constituency and, therefore, must have a role in overseeing the various development projects that are being proposed and implemented in his area. He is not taking over the decision-making authority of the Municipal Corporation.

**The draft Bill submitted by your committee provided for a formula-driven allocation of funds from the state to the corporations. But this has been removed in the law. With corporations having wide revenue disparities, how do you ensure parity among the corporations?**
The Government has taken care to ensure that each corporation has sufficient revenue to meet its administrative expenses as well as development costs. The GBA will be monitoring the finances of every corporation and, wherever required, will be in a position to recommend to the Government the release of additional grants to such corporations where there is a need. But in our thinking, such a situation may not arise, as sufficient care is taken to ensure equitable financial independence.

**What is your opinion on the ward delimitation process that was carried out after the Act came into existence? Even now, in a few wards, the population is above 40,000. Would smaller wards have reduced entry barriers in elections and probably encouraged new urban politics?**
The work of ward delimitation is a statutory responsibility, and the Delimitation Commission's role is independent. Any recommendation by the Delimitation Commission would have taken into consideration the public consultation and opinions of people's representatives. However, it may be noted that against the erstwhile 198 wards, the number of wards suggested now is 369, which is almost more than one and a half times the existing number and has certainly reduced the population of each ward and made it more effectively manageable. However, as we move along, the government can, where necessary, increase the number of wards in future if needed for better administrative reasons.

# Bengaluru researchers achieve breakthrough in converting waste heat to power

DH SPECIAL

**ASRA MAVAD**
BENGALURU, DHNS

A group of researchers at the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) in Bengaluru has recently had a breakthrough, successfully reaching an impressive maximum power conversion efficiency of nearly 12% in thermoelectric energy conversion.

This is significantly higher than what a market-based thermoelectric energy converter can produce. On average, a market-based thermoelectric energy converter provides a power conversion efficiency of 6–7%. Among other uses of this research, if one has a hybrid car, such an energy conversion process can be used to charge the electric batteries using the wasted heat from the fuel.

The research group, led by Professor Kanishka Biswas at JNCASR, has been working in the field of thermoelectric energy conversion for the past 15 years, working at the interface of chemistry and physics.

"When you take the example of any energy conversion process, we only end up utilising about 35% of it; 65% goes out in the form of waste heat. This applies to almost any form of energy conversion — from a simple light bulb to fuel conversion in automobiles to even energy conversion at a steel or nuclear power plant," explained Biswas.

## What is the benefit?

What thermoelectricity can do is convert this waste heat into electricity. Thermoelectric conversion directly turns heat differences into electricity, enabling waste-heat recovery and off-grid power, offering sustainable energy by reducing consumption. Thermoelectric systems generate clean electricity without emitting Carbon Monoxide (CO) and Carbon Dioxide (CO ) and require virtually no maintenance due to the absence of moving parts.

However, for efficient thermoelectric energy conversion, a compound needs to be a bad conductor of heat and a good conductor of electricity. The researchers have achieved this using a Germanium Telluride (GeTe) compound. "For the first time, an extraordinary zT of ₹2.7 at 628 K has been achieved in a GeTe-based system by engineering ferroelectric instability," Biswas told *DH*. 'zT' is the thermoelectric figure of merit, a dimensionless number that indicates how efficiently a material converts heat into electricity — higher zT means better thermoelectric performance.

"This approach induces polar local distortions that strongly scatter heat-carrying phonons, dramatically boosting thermoelectric performance. We used this material to achieve a maximum power conversion efficiency of nearly 12%," he elaborated. Their work has recently been published in Advanced Materials, a highly regarded journal in materials science.

Biswas also shed light on the wide applications of thermoelectric energy. Capturing and converting this waste heat into usable electricity through thermoelectric materials and devices could transform sectors such as power generation, steel manufacturing, defence, space technology, off-grid cooking like chulahs, and the automobile industry.

"For example, if you're using a hybrid car with thermoelectric conversion, we can use the waste heat from fuel conversion and use it to charge the electric batteries. In another scenario, in Indian villages, the heat from the wood stove can be used to charge a mobile phone. There are varied applications of thermoelectric energy conversion, especially in the defence sector," added Biswas.

Additionally, the team has also recently designed a new compound that can aid in the process of efficient thermoelectric energy conversion. It is a quaternary entropy-stabilised material that achieves an exceptional balance of properties required for thermoelectric energy conversion. The compound exhibits ultralow, glass-like thermal conductivity and metal-like electrical conductivity. This work has been recently published in the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*.

## Metro QR tickets now on Navi UPI

**BENGALURU, DHNS: Making Metro travel more accessible, Navi UPI has integrated with the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) network, enabling Bengaluru commuters to purchase Metro QR tickets directly through the app.**

**The service, already launched in Delhi and Mumbai, will soon expand to other cities, including Chennai, Hyderabad and Kochi.**

**With this integration, commuters can plan routes, book single- or return-journey QR tickets, and make instant payments on a single platform. The move also supports Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited's (BMRCL) shift towards paperless ticketing by eliminating the need for physical tickets.**

# Survey of city teens reveals strong link between family and happiness

**Material comforts and academic performance had minimal impact**

**SNEHA RAMESH**
BENGALURU, DHNS

The World Happiness Report, released a few months ago, put India in one of the lowest spots, indicating that the citizens were not really happy. Taking a cue from this, Prayoga Institute of Education Research, a Bengaluru-based NGO, conducted a pilot study with 188 students from the city to understand how happy students were.

The happiness levels were calculated based on the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire, and the results revealed that the students were moderately happy, as against the overall population that was said to be not so happy.

Surprisingly, the scores of both government and private school children were close, indicating that irrespective of the type of school, the children were generally happy.

All the students were between the age group of 13 and 14, and as against the general conception that children could be kept happier with materialistic things, the survey revealed that a stable family and emotional bonding were what kept the students happy, and academic performance had very little impact on the happiness levels.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- Children from government and private schools are equally happy
- Exam scores seem to have less impact on happiness levels
- Family and relationships play a key role and have a big impact on happiness levels

**TOP DRIVERS OF HAPPINESS**

**Family stability**
- Strong family relationships ranked No.1

**Emotional bonding**
- Feeling supported and understood

**Leisure activities**
- Hobbies, play, music, sports

**Connection with nature**
- Walks, greenery, open spaces

**Appreciation & achievement**
- Being recognised for small wins

**Material pleasures**
- Contributed only marginally

"Through this pilot with a modest sample size, we wanted to capture what makes the students happy, and we found some heartening takeaways. The family relationships and emotional stability mattered the most vis-à-vis the material comforts. Keeping this as the baseline, we will extend the study for a more nuanced and wider research to know how happy the students are and the contributing factors," said Karuna Simha, senior education researcher at Prayoga, who oversaw the research. Her team, comprising Subashree Pattanayak and Anitha B, worked on the project.

The researchers plan to extend the study to a larger base in the next phase.

The methodology for evaluation also included one open-ended question—"What makes you happy?"

The research showed that the key indicators for the happiness quotient were family relationships — students coming from stable families expressed that their happiness lies in their cosy homes.

Apart from this, leisurely activities, materialistic pleasures, connection with nature, achievement and appreciation, and positive emotional responses were spoken about as the key to happiness.

"Our findings pave the way for further qualitative studies to explore the complex and layered world of happiness. This can have a bearing on school policy and practice towards creating a nurturing ecosystem that ensures student wellbeing," said Subashree Pattanayak, the primary researcher.

## Techie dies in bike crash

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** A 25-year-old techie from Infosys was killed instantly in a tragic road accident early Friday morning while returning home from work. The incident occurred around 3.15 am near the Bommasandra Metro Station.

Madivala traffic police stated that preliminary investigation points to overspeeding as the primary cause. Akshay, a resident of Banaswadi, allegedly lost control of his motorcycle and violently struck a stationary goods truck parked on the roadside.

The severe impact resulted in fatal head injuries, killing him on the spot. Police officers investigating the crash noted that the deceased was not wearing a helmet at the time of the collision, a factor that likely contributed to his instant death.

## Drug peddler targeting college students arrested

BENGALURU, DHNS

**Prem alias Vaishnav**

The High Grounds police busted an illicit drug operation on Tuesday, arresting a 27-year-old man who was allegedly targeting college students in the city to sell psychotropic substances.

The accused, Prem alias Vaishnav, was operating primarily near educational institutions, selling orange-coloured tablets illegally at an excessive rate, charging students between Rs 200 and sometimes up to Rs 500 per pill based on demand.

Acting on credible intelligence inputs, police swiftly took Prem into custody and initiated an interrogation. The subsequent search of his residence led to the seizure of a massive consignment of 6,700 tablets, estimated to cost Rs 14 lakh in the illegal market.

DCP Central, Akshay M Hakay, explaining the nature of the contraband, said that the tablet is essentially a prescription drug formulated with a painkiller that delivers an opium-like effect.

When consumed extensively, the drug provides a psychotropic effect. The accused confessed to obtaining the large quantities of tablets through a parcel delivery network.

A case has been registered under relevant sections of the law, and the police noted that further investigation is underway to dismantle the larger supply chain and trace the supplier.

## After criticism, GBA makes sweeping machine costs public

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) on Saturday published a detailed breakup of the expenses for the mechanical sweeping machines.

The move comes amid criticism over the project cost. GBA had announced that approximately Rs 613 crore would be required to rent 46 mechanical sweeping machines for seven years.

According to the breakup, the GBA would be spending Rs 894.53 to sweep one kilometre of road annually. This includes Rs 243.31 on fuel, Rs 104.12 on maintenance, and Rs 330.85 as the EMI cost for the machine. The costs were determined considering that each machine would be used to sweep at least 40 km of road daily and that year-on-year maintenance costs would increase by 5%.

The detailed expenses can be checked on the GBA website *https://bbmp.gov.in/updates/index.html*

## NGT notice to govt after second petition against tunnel road

**CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI**
BENGALURU, DHNS

A second petition against Bengaluru's proposed tunnel road has been filed before the National Green Tribunal (NGT), stating that the circumvention of the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) regime was in direct violation of the NGT order.

The original application by Pratibha R and others filed before the NGT's Southern Zone bench noted that the 6-lane tunnel was a new highway project that required clearance. "Even if not considered a highway (assuming but not admitting, in arguendo), it is an area development project requiring prior clearance under entry 8(b) of the EIA Notification, 2006," the application stated.

The applicant pointed to the NGT's ruling in the application against the steel flyover (Neelaiah v Union of India), yet another controversial project. The tribunal had directed the authorities to obtain prior environmental clearance before proceeding with the project. In another case challenging the environmental clearance given to 100-km flyovers across Bengaluru (Environment Support Group v KRDCL), the government had filed a memo stating that it would not proceed with the project. The case was disposed of in view of the government's position.

"The subject project is yet another iteration of the earlier attempts, and the twin 3-lane tunnels of total length 17.496 km from the north to the south of the city. These tunnels are proposed at a depth of 15.5 metres below ground level. The finished diameter of the tunnel is 13.5 m, meaning that the area of construction would necessarily have to be much wider," she said, praying for a permanent injunction restraining the authorities and contractors from going ahead with the project.

The applicant noted that the tunnel project needs to be evaluated under the category of 'Highways' as explained under section 7(f) of the Schedule to the EIA Notification 2006, which notes that 'highways' include expressways. Even if assuming that the project is not a highway, the project requires clearance under 8(b) as an 'area development project'.

Noting that conducting EIA studies will help in informed decision-making, the applicant said the authorities were violating the principle of sustainable development by circumventing it. The applicant stated that the Detailed Project Report was devoid of key details and goes against the city's Comprehensive Mobility Plan as pointed out by the Directorate of Urban Land Transport.

The application comes weeks after the NGT issued notice to the authorities based on an application by the Bengaluru Praja Vedike and others who questioned the tunnel.

During the previous hearing, the authorities had submitted to the tribunal that the project was challenged before the High Court of Karnataka. However, the NGT noted that the hearing would continue and asked them to file their response, posting the matter for December 6.

## Health minister urges pharma industry to follow rules

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The Indian Pharmaceutical Association (IPA) Karnataka branch, in association with the Karnataka Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Manufacturers' Association (KDPMA), held a one-day workshop for pharma companies and students on Managing Regulatory Changes in Solid Oral Dosage Forms on Saturday.

The Health and Family Welfare Minister, Dinesh Gundu Rao, spoke about the critical issues directly impacting public health and the credibility of the pharmaceutical sector. "The Government has notified the revised Schedule M to modernise India's Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) in alignment with global standards such as WHO-GMP and international quality expectations," said Rao.

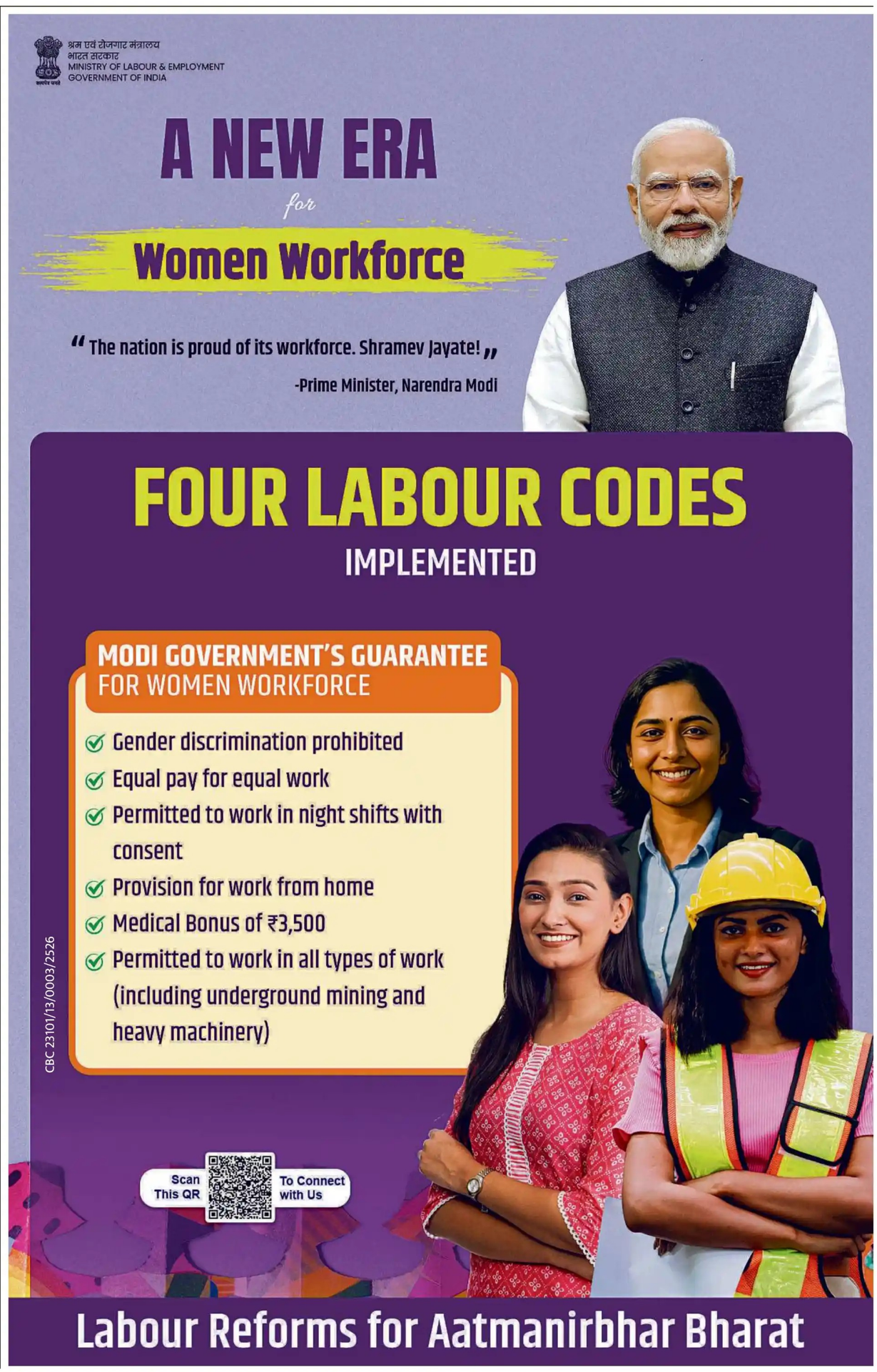
Schedule M of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1945, sets the national standards for Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for pharmaceuticals in India.

The revised Schedule M published in 2023 includes robust quality systems, efficiency and traceability in manufacturing, better training and competency among personnel, improved documentation and digital compliance, and stronger environmental and contamination controls.

The minister urged pharmaceutical proprietors to view these changes not as burdens but as investments in the credibility and sustainability of their businesses.

Speaking about another persistent challenge, Rao said that the presence of Not of Standard Quality (NSQ) drugs across the country is not acceptable. "I want to make it clear that there will be no tolerance against NSQ. Recent surveillance data and regulatory actions have shown avoidable instances of NSQ products related to poor adherence to quality standards, inadequate testing, lapses in documentation, and non-compliance with GMP."

Speaking to *DH*, Dr Umesh S, Additional Drug Controller, said, "Following the revised Schedule M is a must, and trained faculty and employees and regulation of NSQs are mandatory."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₹ 49.36 - 88.53 Lakhs*
G+14
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G+14
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₹ 80.30 L - 1.01 Cr*
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₹ 83.97 L - 1.31 Cr*
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₹ 72.02 L - 1.21 Cr*
G+14
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SARJAPUR - ATTIBELE ROAD
₹ 63.60 - 83.25 Lakhs*
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## Cop among 6 held in Rs 7.11-cr ATM ...

ATM, From Page 3

Men impersonating RBI officers allegely stopped the van carrying Rs 7.11 crore near DJ Halli. Preliminary information suggested a route ambush and a clean getaway.

However, investigators later established that the robbery occurred earlier — at 12.48 pm — along the Ashoka Pillar–Jayanagar–Dairy Circle corridor. The gang intercepted the vehicle, forced open the rear compartment, grabbed multiple cash boxes and abandoned the van around 1.16 pm before dispersing in different vehicles.

### Cracked in record time

Siddapura police registered a case of armed dacoity and what appeared to be a meticulously planned, near-perfect insider-assisted robbery, was cracked in record time. The gang intercepted the cash van and took two security personnel in their Innova car on the pretext of an inquiry, while another accused boarded the cash van and asked the driver to drive towards Dairy Circle flyover.

He later stopped the van near the flyover, took the cash box at gunpoint and escaped, while the other accused dropped the security guards and cash custodian on the way and joined the other accused with the cash box.

Within 24 hours, the police had identified the suspects and the vehicles used in the heist. The gang is estimated to have comprised about 9 to 11 members involved in planning, execution and movement of the stolen cash.

The gang, after reaching Kuppam near Chittoor, abandoned their Innova vehicle and threw away cash boxes after emptying them. They loaded the stolen money in gunny bags and a suitcase in a WagonR car to escape towards Tamil Nadu.

Singh, while congratulating the team and announcing a cash reward of Rs 5 lakh for the team, further said that teams are continuing efforts to trace the remaining 6-7 accused in multiple states to recover the remaining amount while three key accused are now in custody.

## FIR against 11 employees of revenue dept

**CHIKKAMAGALURU, DHNS:** The Kadur police have registered a FIR against 11 employees of the Revenue Department for allegedly sanctioning old-age pension to middle-aged persons. The deputy commissioner had received complaints in this regard. Following his directions, the assistant commissioner had conducted a preliminary investigation. Based on this report, the Revenue department instructed that criminal cases be filed against all those involved.

# Govt's efforts to tap KSPCB funds set to hit legal hurdle

## NGT had slammed diversion of funds from CPCB

**CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI**
BENGALURU, DHNS

The state government's repeated attempts to tap into the funds of the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) despite pushback from the autonomous body is set to hit a legal hurdle as it runs against orders issued by the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

The state government, through the additional chief secretary, Forest, Ecology and Environment Department had sought Rs 300 crore for railway barricading to mitigate man-elephant conflict and afforestation works. Out of the said sum, Rs 200 crore was supposed to be loan at 7.5% interest and Rs 100 crore as grant. In addition, the government had sought Rs 126 crore interest-free loan to implement Karnataka Strengthening of Coastal Resilience Economy (K-Shore) project.

During its meeting held on December 2, 2024 , the Board rejected the proposal to both lend and grant money. While lending, especially with interest, risked putting the Board in the category of entities engaged in commercial activity, it found that expending money (as grant) was possible only when the activities are covered under its functions.

A year before, in December 2023, the National Green Tribunal had slammed the diversion of funds from the Central Pollution Control Board for other works. The tribunal told the CPCB to "ensure that amount deposited with the CPCB under the head of the 'environmental compensation' is neither diverted nor there should be any financial irregularity as it amounts to misappropriation of funds on the part of CPCB by providing such funds for activities which are not within the domain of the CPCB".

Sources in the pollution control board said the problem is not unique to Karnataka. "This is symptomatic of a larger problem. Across the country, there are attempts being made to get the PCB funds for development works which have to be taken up by other statutory bodies. This raises concern because on the one hand, the PCBs are not allowed to fill vacancies to perform their tasks, which have increased multifold over the last few years. On the other hand, their funds are sought for works not covered by the Air Act or Water Act, the two laws that govern the PCBs," official sources said.

Interestingly, the government of Punjab was taken to the principal bench of the NGT for trying to divert Rs 250 crore of Punjab PCB funds to the state treasury. As per the NGT order dated October 27, the Punjab government made a sudden U-turn. A bench of chairperson Prakash Shrivastava and expert member A Senthil Vel noted that the chief secretary has "withdrawn" the decision to transfer Rs 250 crore from the Punjab PCB.

Sources said the KSPCB had tried its best to inform the government about the legal hurdles in transferring funds. "Despite the best efforts, the pressure is mounting. We hope someone will take this matter to the courts so that a blanket order is issued to all PCBs to prevent diversion of funds," the source added.

# Space around schools will be rented for ads: Minister

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a bid to make government schools financially self-sufficient, the Department of School Education and Literacy has decided to allow the space in and around the institutions to be used for advertisements.

Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa said that the model had been successfully implemented in Dakshina Kannada. Buoyed by its success in the coastal district, the department has decided to implement the same across the state, he added.

Madhu told *DH* that the department would scrutinise every advertisement thoroughly before approving its display at schools.

"We will obviously not permit advertisements for tobacco products and liquor," the minister said.

Given that most government schools are situated in prime areas, advertisers would be keen to market their products and services in such spaces. "In Dakshina Kannada, we rented the space to a few sari brands that marketed their products using a digital screen. It helped generate considerable revenue, which is being used for the schools' maintenance," said Madhu.

Incidentally, during his stint as the Minister for School Education, Tanveer Sait had also allowed the space around schools to be used for advertisements. Companies using the space were asked to paint the entire compound in exchange for access to the space. However, the department subjected all such advertisements to strict scrutiny before approving their display.

# ATM cash heist: Cops track down suspects in 54 hours

BENGALURU, DHNS

As many as 200 policemen belonging to 11 special teams were on the hunt for the suspects in the Rs 7.11-crore ATM cash van heist. They were tracked down within 54 hours of the loot, a senior police officer said.

The police analysed route movements and examined technical evidence apart from scouring through close to 200-odd CCTV footages, which provided crucial evidence establishing the role of the accused. Police pieced together scattered clues by retracing the van's exact movements, scrutinising partial CCTV footage and investigating the possibility of an insider's hand. This led them to the main conspirators, whose arrests were made in quick succession, which yielded the recovery of a major portion of the stolen cash.

Police teams from Siddapura, Jayanagar and the Central Crime Branch were involved in the operation. Over 30 persons were questioned.

CMS company, which deals with transportation of crores of rupees everyday, does not follow safety measures despite a set of guidelines issued by RBI, the probe revealed.

The guidelines on deployment of staff, training for security personnel, background verification, GPS tracking and recruitment of staff have been grossly violated which resulted in such incidents, police officials said.

"We have prepared a report in this regard and submitted to the authority concerned seeking action for violating the guidelines," Bengaluru city police commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh said.

### 'Bar mates planned robbery plot'

**Naik and Xavier became friends in a bar and hatched the robbery plot. Naik trained him on how to escape from police radar after the robbery and gave the idea of changing fake number plates frequently, while shifting money into multiple cars. Then the duo contacted Gopi to join them. Xavier had left his job at CMS company a few years ago after he met an accident.**

Police Commissioner Seemanth Kumar Singh and his team along with cash recovered, at a press meet in Bengaluru on Saturday. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

## 'Accused' cop Annappa Naik was checking vehicles after heist

**MANJUNATH SHETTAR**
BENGALURU, DHNS

Annappa Naik, the 'accused' constable with Govindapura police station, had earlier worked as crime staff in Banasawadi station, where he was posted after his appointment in 2018. He began extorting the public while on duty and befriended drug peddlers to make easy money. Station inspectors who came to know about his criminal activities warned him to stay away and he was caught for the same offence in Bharathinagar station once. But no case was registered.

One of his senior officers said that he was deployed in Freedom Park for duty since a few months after the police top brass came to know about his habitual extortion. He also separated from his family on November 19.

On the day of the crime, he was driving a Hoysala patrolling vehicle and seemed normal. He was busy in vehicle checking by putting up barricades in and around the area as the city police were on high alert, following the heist.

# Land acquisition: SIT to probe officials-lawyer nexus, says DKS

BENGALURU, DHNS

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Saturday announced that a special investigation team (SIT) would look into collusion between officials and lawyers who caused losses to the government in land-acquisition cases.

Shivakumar, who is also the minister for Water Resources and Bengaluru Urban Development, said this after chairing a meeting where he reviewed pending court cases under his departments.

"I got an internal investigation done on how many cases where there, why these cases went to court, and why they haven't been disposed of. The information I got was that these cases would cause more burden on the government," Shivakumar said.

In his irrigation department, Shivakumar said if compensation for the land acquired was fixed at Rs 9 lakh an acre, courts have ended up granting Rs 9-20 crore.

**D K SHIVAKUMAR**
**Deputy chief minister**

"I got an internal investigation done on how many cases where there, why these cases went to court, and why they haven't been disposed of. The information I got was that these cases would cause more burden on the government.

"If we don't fix the loopholes, then the government will possibly face a burden of Rs 5 lakh crore," Shivakumar said.

There are 61,843 pending court cases pertaining to various irrigation utilities - 25,356 in Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Ltd (KNNL), 2,856 in Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Ltd (VJNL), 4,455 in Cauvery Neeravari Nigam Ltd (CNNL) and 29,176 in Krishna Bhagya Jala Nigam Ltd (KBJNL). There are 219 lawyers involved in these cases.

"An investigation ordered by the revenue department found that officials and lawyers did not file appeals within the stipulated time. We'll form an SIT to see how and where such conspiracies were hatched. Those guilty of dereliction will be suspended and they'll face a department inquiry. Lawyers who didn't perform by filing timely appeals before courts will be dismissed. We've decided to hold both officials and lawyers responsible," Shivakumar explained.

Shivakumar also said that the government would examine the formation of an authority headed by a retired judge to adjudicate disputes related to land acquisition. "There's provision (for this authority) under the land acquisition law," he said.

# Heist gang studied cash-can route for three months

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The accused spent 3 months mapping, shadowing and rehearsing the movement of the CMS Info Systems . They chose Wednesday (Nov 19) as the day to strike — when cash replenishment in multiple ATMs is typically at its peak.

The police told *DH* that the suspects even did a 2-week recce of the area.

The gang conducted multiple dry runs, trailing the cash-van along its daily replenishment circuit across south Bengaluru. The suspects allegedly noted exact halt points, crew's break timings, blind spots and low-surveillance stretches, eventually identifying junctions most vulnerable.

They refrained from using mobile phones during the heist to avoid detection. They used an internet calling App and switched languages mid-conversation to confuse potential witnesses and delay profiling.

More than two vehicles were used and their number plates changed frequently to throw cops off their trail. Non-serialised currency was stolen, making post-crime tracing nearly impossible. The accused also relied on real-time media updates, which briefly risked exposing early police leads. Constable Naik is said to have played a key role in supervising the entire operation.

A LAP IN NATURE'S LAP

# Malnad Ultra: A fulfilling, adventure-filled run via coffee estates

CHIKKAMAGALURU, DHNS

The challenging ninth Malnad Ultra run in the 30-, 50- and 100-km categories, passing through nine privately owned coffee plantations with a history of over 150 years, was flagged off from Navagrama cricket maidan by Rana Robillard, chief people officer of Tekion, on Saturday.

The maidan was also the start and finish line for runners competing in the challenging run organised by Bengaluru-based GIREM (Global Initiative for Restructuring Environment and Management) and Chikkamagaluru Golf Club.

The 100-km category (day and night), flagged off at 6.30 am, saw the participation of 113 runners. The 50-km category, flagged off at 7 am, witnessed the participation of 344 runners.

The 30-km category, flagged off within minutes after the start of the 50-km category, witnessed the highest number of 550 runners. The 50-km night edition, the highlight of the trail, which was flagged off at 4.30 pm, had 45 runners.

Runners who showed up after meeting all the 'intermediate cut-off times' (published in the registered category) received the prestigious 'Finisher Buckle'.

Emotional moments were witnessed as runners participating in the 50-km night edition received hugs from their near and dear ones. As the runners set their headlights and embarked on the gruelling trail, crowds lined up on either sides of the course and cheered the runners. A Bengaluru-based retired banker, who arrived with a massive Karnataka flag, received a thunderous applause. Many runners said they would return home with fond memories from the scenic trail, through the dense coffee estates in the Western Ghats.

Dr Thippa Reddy, 65, from Ballari said he was participating for the first time in the Malnad Ultra run.

"The experience gained from this run makes me look forward to participating in more such trails," he said. Dr Reddy finished the 30-km category within 3:35 hours. Ashwini Dhyamangowdar from Belagavi, participating in her first trail, said the course was adventurous. She finished the 30-km course in 5:35 hours.

Participants set off for the 30-km category at the ninth Malnad Ultra run, after flag off at the Navagrama cricket stadium at Mallanduru in Chikkamagaluru on Saturday.

Tender Ref. No.: HIL/UDL/REL/1/2025-26, Dt. 18.11.2025

HIL (India) Limited
(Govt. of India Enterprise)
SCOPE Complex, Core-6, 2nd Floor
7 Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003
Website - www.hil.gov.in

Online tender invited through website https://hil.abcprocure.com/EPROC & CPP portal.

| Description | EMD Rs. |
|---|---|
| Tender for "Dismantling, packaging, transporting and relocating of Pendimethalin, Glyphosate, Mancozeb & HILGOLD plants from Udyogamandal unit to Rasayani Unit", Event ID No. 58428, with due date of tender 02.12.2025 up to 14:00 Hrs. | Rs. 5,00,000/- |

Interested bidders may download the details from our website www.hil.gov.in

Further Corrigendum, if any to the tender will be hosted in the above websites

CBC 02111/11/0004/2526

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

Chennai Division — Mechanical Branch

E-Tender Notice No: M/M/W271/EPPFS CAI WORK1 - dt. 21.11.2025

Divisional Railway Manager / Mechanical Branch / Chennai Division, Chennai-600 003 for and on behalf of the President of India invites ONLINE tenders for the following work as per tender notice given in the e-tender Portal www.ireps.gov.in. The tenderer(s) / contractor(s) intending to apply for e-tender for Mechanical works in Chennai division need to get enrolled in the e-tender portal www.ireps.gov.in and only online tenders will be accepted.

Description: Outsourcing of "Supply and installation of metallic (brass) Y strainer (3/4"), NRV-1/4" (SS) and Shifting of the Pressurizer unit (cylinder) of EPPFS and PFS fitted in LHB coaches at BBQ, GSN & TBM coaching depots for a period of one year.

| | |
|---|---|
| Location | Chennai |
| Advertised tender value in (Rs) | 59,94,423.60/- |
| Earnest Money Deposit in (Rs) | 1,19,900.00/- |
| Similar nature of work | Applicable |
| Period of completion in months | 12 Months |

Tender closing date & time:12.12.2025 @ 16:00 hrs
Details of value of tender, EMD are given in the e-portal www.ireps.gov.in.
For details of bid submission please refer to the web portal www.ireps.gov.in.

Divisional Railway Manager (Mechanical)
Chennai Division, Southern Railway, Chennai – 600 003.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

South Western Railway invites application for empanelment of Advocates for CAT & RCT, Bengaluru Bench, Karnataka.

Notification calling for application from eligible Advocates for Central Administrative Tribunal and Railway Claims Tribunal, Bengaluru Bench, Karnataka Panel have been published on https://swr.indianrailways.gov.in.

Last date for submission of application: Upto 23:59 Hrs. on 17-12-2025

For details log on: https://swr.indianrailways.gov.in.

Senior Law Officer/HQ
PUB/673/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26 Hubballi

Download the UTS Mobile App from Google Play Store for ease of booking of unreserved tickets

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

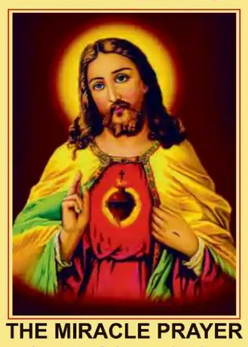
Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
(Distt. - Saran), Bihar - 841221

E-Tender No.: SCP-25RRT Dated: 19.11.2025 Dy. CME/Maint, Rail Wheel Plant, Bela acting for and on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender through Indian Railways specialized tendering portal www.ireps.gov.in from reputed firms based on single packet system for the under mentioned work: 1. Name of Work with its Location and Completion Period: Name of Work: Revamping & Up-gradation of sand coating plant of complete sand system in mould room at RWP/Bela. Location: Rail Wheel Plant (RWP), Bela. Completion Period: 08 Months. 2. Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹ 22901537.35 3. Bid Security to be Deposited: ₹ 264600.00 4. Tender Closing Date and Time: 12.12.2025 at 15:00 hrs. 5. Website particulars, Notice Board location where complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc.: For full details and submission of bid tenderer/bidder may kindly visit Indian Railways specialized tendering portal www.ireps.gov.in. The tenderer(s)/bidder(s) are directed to remain connected with IREPS portal www.ireps.gov.in for updates including Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation with respect to the above tender.

Dy. CME/Maint./RWP/Bela
RWP/CPRO/ADVT/2025-26/80

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving

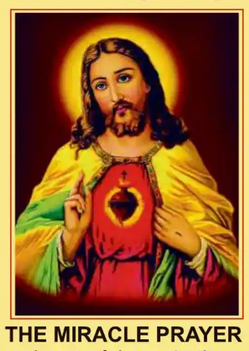


THE MIRACLE PRAYER

Dear heart of Jesus in the past I have asked many favours. This time I ask you this special one (mention favour). Take it dear heart of Jesus and place it within your heart where your father sees it. Then in his merciful eyes it will become your own favour not mine. Amen. Say this prayer three times for three days and your favour will be granted. Never been known to fail. Must promise publication of prayer.

- Lokanath & Family

Thanksgiving



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- Prema & Family

e-Procurement Cell
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
SPECIAL WORKS DIVISION, BUILDING CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT
Ranchi

CORRIGENDUM-2

e-Procurement Tender Reference No:- BCD/EE, Special Works Div, BCD, Ranchi-25/2025-26 Date:-24.09.25, PR No-362906 Building(25-26).D ,oa PR No-365469 Building(25-26).D Proposed Construction of Jharkhand Bhawan at Vashi, Navi Mumbai, Maharastra कार्य से संबंधित है, के तिथियों में अपरिहार्य कारणवश पुनः संशोधन किया जा रहा है जिसका विवरणी निम्नवत है :–

| क्र0 सं0 | मद | पूर्व की तिथि | संशोधित तिथि | पुनः संशोधित तिथि |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | बिड प्राप्ति के लिए अन्तिम तिथि/समय | 10.11.2025 at 1.00 P.M | 25.11.2025 at 1.00 P.M | 17.12.2025 at 1.00 P.M |
| 2 | निविदा खोलने की तिथि/समय | 11.11.2025 at 1.00 P.M | 26.11.2025 at 1.00 P.M | 18.12.2025 at 1.00 P.M |

शेष सभी शर्ते यथावत रहेंगी।

Nodal Officer, e-Procurement Cell
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Special Works Division
Building Construction Department, Ranchi

PR 366837 Building (25-26)_D

**UNDONE BY THE UNPREDICTABLE** Rains less, but good water table bails out south's agri sector

# 2 years of 'abnormal monsoon' puts NK farmers in total distress

PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS

For the last two years, North Interior Karnataka (NIK) region has witnessed higher rainfall days compared to South Interior Karnataka (SIK).

NIK, in 2025 and 2024, reported 102 and 108 rainfall days, whereas SIK recorded 89 and 97 rain days, respectively.

The coastal and Malnad regions clocked their average rainfall of around 160 days this year.

Officials in India Meteorological Department record one rainfall day if a weather monitoring station registers more than 2.5 mm of rainfall in 24 hours.

The Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre (KSNMDC) has over 6,500 telemetric rain gauges, 850 telemetric weather stations and 14 seismic stations in the state to monitor weather.

The higher number of rainfall days has adversely impacted dry-agriculture crops of north Karnataka region, especially tur, green gram and maize.

Data from the agriculture department shows crops on nearly 13.65 lakh hectares were affected this monsoon and nearly 70% of that was recorded in the districts of Kalaburagi, Yadgir, Vijaypur, Gadag, Bagalkot, Bidar and Dharwad.

The excess rain will not only increase the cost of cultivation for farmers but, will also increase food inflation.

With 149 rain days, 2025 was Karnataka's third wettest year in the last 5 years.

Data shows that in the last six years, the state has reported five high rainfall years.

Multiple factors, including climate change and wind pattern, are being cited for the increasing rainfall days in north Karnataka.

"Monsoon arrived in Karnataka much before its usual first week of June. Rains have continued till October. In a normal rainfall year, the state used to record 65-70 days of rainfall. However, this year, it has been higher in all four regions," says N Puviarasan, head, Bengaluru Meteorological Centre.

NIK witnessed more rainfall because the south west monsoon trough axis was south of its normal position. The monsoon depression or low developed in head bay was moving along the monsoon trough giving more rainfall over NIK than SIK, he says.

The farmers of north Karnataka region are not just affected by flooded fields, but also diseases caused by excess rainfall. Tur, one of the staple crops of the seven districts of NIK, is affected by phytophthora stem blight, macrophomina blight and dry root rot diseases.

"Since 2021, NIK is witnessing an intense and prolonged rainy season. A region that used to receive 400 mm of annual rainfall is getting over 900 mm of rainfall in just two-three months, resulting in damage to crops and disease spread," says Mallikarjun Kenganal, senior scientist (plant pathology).

He says the excess rain is also resulting in leaching out of soil content of fields, forcing farmers to shell out more on cultivating crops.

"The long duration of rains has also adversely impacted crop growth. Tur, which had to flower by now and get harvested by December, is still in vegetative stage. He says the state could witness at least 50% lower yield of tur this year.

Karnataka cultivates kharif crops on 81.22 lakh ha, out of which over 13.65 lakh ha has sustained losses.

Tur, cultivated on nearly 5.36 lakh ha, has been damaged, followed by cotton on 2.68 lakh ha, green gram on 2.63 lakh ha, maize on 1.21 lakh ha and soybean on 97,810 ha.

Flooding of Bhima and Krishna rivers in September and October resulted in 3.24 lakh ha of standing crops being damaged in Kalaburagi district, followed by Vijayapura (3.14 lakh ha), Bidar (16.54 lakh ha), Yadgir (1.42 lakh ha), Gadag (1.21 lakh ha), Dharwad 93,230 ha and Belagavi 84,203 ha.

Thimmegowda M N, agro-metrologist at University of Agriculture Sciences (UAS), Bengaluru, says although the state witnessed 20% to 40% excess rainfall days this year, its distribution was not even across the state and duration.

"There were long periods of rain-free dry spells. Yet, the cultivation of foodgrains will not be impacted in SIK as the previous year's excess rain supported groundwater this year and resulted in maintaining soil moisture," he says.

He predicts that while pulses in NIK region may face temporary setback during kharif season, rabi could witness bumper yield, if weather pattern is good.

Thimmegowda says SIK is better placed as the reservoirs are almost filled and there was no flooding in any districts.

Prolonged rains in the state could also impact the production of areca and coconut as they too are vulnerable to disease, Kenganal said.

**Crop loss reported during 2025 South West Monsoon**
**(June -Sept)**

| Crop | Area in ha |
|---|---|
| Maize | 1.21 lakh ha |
| Tur | 5.36 lakh |
| Green gram | 2.63 lakh |
| Cotton | 2.68 lakh |
| Soybean | 97,810 ha |
| Blackgram | 40,313 ha |
| Sugarcane | 14,557 ha |
| **Districts** | **Area in ha** |
| Kalaburagi | 3.24 lakh ha |
| Vijayapura | 3.14 lakh ha |
| Bidar | 1.65 lakh ha |
| Yadgir | 1.42 lakh ha |

Farmers of north Karnataka cultivating dry crops are not just affected by flooded fields, but also diseases caused by excess rainfall.

**Region-wise breakup of rain days**

| Region | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| South interior Karnataka | 99 | 120 | 117 | 72 | 97 | 89 |
| North Interior Karnataka | 92 | 94 | 99 | 62 | 108 | 102 |
| Malnad | 148 | 184 | 157 | 112 | 163 | 154 |
| Coastal | 158 | 205 | 167 | 130 | 170 | 169 |
| State | 138 | 163 | 142 | 111 | 156 | 149 |

*Nov

Source: Karnataka State Natural disaster monitoring centre and Agriculture department

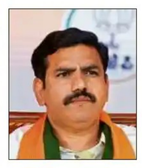
# Shivakumar not in touch with BJP, asserts Vijayendra

**'Reports of Deputy CM meeting Amit Shah false'**

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Dismissing speculations that Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar was touch with BJP, the party's state president B Y Vijayendra said on Saturday that the saffron party was not interested in the Congress' internal affairs.

"Some Congress leaders are spreading fake news that Shivakumar is in touch with Union Home Minister Amit Shah. There is no truth in such news. Both Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM Shivakumar are busy in a power tussle, instead of focusing on people's welfare," Vijayendra told reporters here.



Vijayendra

"We are not interested in Congress' matters. The government will collapse on its own," he said. The administration in Karnataka has come to a standstill due to the feud, the state BJP chief said.

"Thrice every month, the DCM is in Delhi to lobby with the party's top brass. Had he made similar visits to North Karnataka, especially the Tungabhadra dam site in whose river basin farmers are not getting enough water for crops, it would have addressed their problems," he said.

On the appointment of a new BJP state president, he said, "At present, I am the president. Despite facing criticism, I am working hard to take everyone along".

## MLAs meet CM

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Congress lawmakers met with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday morning amid speculation within the party over the leadership change and a Cabinet reshuffle.

Siddaramaiah

MLAs C P Yogeshwar, Srinivas Mane, Yasir Ahmed Khan Pathan, and B K Sangamesh, some of whom had met Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Friday, visited Siddaramaiah.

During the day, Magadi MLA H C Balakrishna urged the Congress high command to intervene and clear the air on leadership. "Otherwise, the party and its workers will be pushed into confusion," he said.

# Cong camps 'purchasing' MLAs, claims Joshi

**HUBBALLI, DHNS:** Union Minister Pralhad Joshi on Saturday alleged that both CM Siddaramaiah and deputy CM D K Shivakumar camps were trying to "purchase" Congress MLAs to garner support in the tussle for power.

Joshi told reporters here that Shivakumar even went to jail to meet some Congress MLAs lodged there to seek their support. He said that the administration in the state had collapsed owing to internal bickerings in the ruling party.

Pralhad Joshi

He said the BJP wanted the Congress government to complete its full term as per people's mandate and there was no question of the party joining hands with "corrupt" MLAs from Congress to form the government.

"We just want Congress to run the administration properly. In Maharashtra, BJP was the single largest party after 2019 elections, and we formed the government after Eknath Shinde came out (from Shiv Sena). In Karnataka, we don't encourage such things as Congress has a clear mandate. As all MLAs in the Congress are corrupt, there is no question of supporting somebody from there, even if they want to be like Shinde," he said.

Calling the CM's statement about the Centre importing 70 lakh metric tonnes of maize a lie, Joshi, who holds consumer affairs, food and public distribution portfolios, said the Centre, in fact, exported maize this year.

# Had requested Sonia to make Siddu CM: Gowda

BENGALURU, DHNS

JD(S) leaders, including its national president H D Deve Gowda, rebutted on Saturday Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's statement that he would not have been allowed to become the chief minister had he been with the regional party.

Addressing the party's silver jubilee event, Deve Gowda said he had gone to Sonia Gandhi with a request to make Siddaramaiah the CM.

"He might have forgotten, but Sonia Gandhi is alive, let him go and check with her about my request to her to make him chief minister. Siddaramaiah, don't forget the path you walked and there should be a little honesty while speaking," Gowda told the CM.

The former prime minister even reminded Siddaramaiah of the opportunities given to him when he was in JD(S).

"Many leaders, including Ramakrishna Hegde, advised me not to promote Siddaramaiah, but I ignored them all and made him finance minister. Do you think he studied at Oxford University and was an economist?," Gowda said.

Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy, JD(S) supremo H D Deve Gowda, party leader C B Suresh Babu and JD(S) youth president Nikhil Kumaraswamy at the party's silver jubilee event in Bengaluru on Saturday. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

The former PM said, "He was not a Supreme Court advocate, not even a High Court advocate. He might have appeared in court as lawyer in a few cases in Mysuru. But I made him finance minister. I regret the decision today".

Gowda also spoke about the trouble he and his party for office space.

Union Minister and JD(S) state president H D Kumaraswamy recalled an incident when Siddaramaiah refused to attend a public event, just because his photograph was missing from the party's banner.

JD(S) youth president Nikhil Kumaraswamy too asked the CM to go back in time and reflect on how he was treated in JD(S) and not to forget the path he walked.

"I want to tell Siddaramanna not to forget that Deve Gowda and the JD(S) took him all the way to the deputy chief minister's position," he said.

Three days ago, at an event in Chamarajanagar, Siddaramaiah said he would have never been CM, if he continued in JD(S).

# HDK predicts 'unforeseen' changes in Karnataka politics

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Union Minister and JD(S) state president H D Kumaraswamy on Saturday hinted about major "political fluctuations" in the state in next six months.

Speaking at the party's silver jubilee event, Kumaraswamy said, "Unforeseen and unexpected events are likely to take place in state politics in the next six months. So, we need to be ready and I advise our leaders and party workers to be with the people and work at the grassroots level".

The former chief minister said the political situation in the state had reached a stage where no one could predict one's political stance.

Meanwhile, party supreme H D Deve Gowda said that JD(S) will never snap its alliance with the NDA. "We will not break our alliance with the NDA under any circumstance. We have full faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership".

Deve Gowda even said that JD(S) would come to power in 2028 and Kumaraswamy would be the chief minister.

# Price crash: CM urges PM to direct central agencies to procure grains under MSP

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** In the wake of a price crash for maize and green gram in Karnataka, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking a direction to national agencies, like NAFED, FCI and NCCF, to purchase these grains at a minimum support price (MSP) to protect farmers.

Karnataka has cultivated maize in over 17.94 lakh hectares and green gram in over 4.16 lakh hectares this Kharif season, Siddaramaiah said.

He added that the state is tentatively expecting a production of over 54.74 lakh metric tonnes of maize and 1.983 lakh metric tonnes of green gram.

"Though this should have been an opportunity for prosperity, the current market conditions have turned it into a crisis," Siddaramaiah said.

The chief minister pointed out that while the Centre fixed MSP at Rs 2,400 per MT for maize and Rs 28,768 per MT for green gram, the prevailing prices in Karnataka dropped to Rs 1,600-1,800 per MT for maize and around Rs 5,400 per MT for green gram.

The chief minister also sought measures to ensure Karnataka's farmers benefit fairly from the ethanol supply chain, pointing out that the basic rate for maize-based ethanol is Rs 266.07 per litre with an added incentive of Rs 5.79 per litre.

He alleged that many ethanol plants are sourcing maize from middlemen instead of farmers.

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ದಿನಾಂಕ: 20.11.2025
**ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ**

ಮಹಾತ್ಮಾಗಾಂಧಿ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಖಾತರಿ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿಗಳ ಸೇವೆಪಡೆಯಲು 03 ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಅವಧಿಗೆ ಮಾನವ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ (ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಂ. RDPR/2025-26/SE2879/CALL-2, Dated: 20.11.2025). ಪ್ರಯುಕ್ತ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಇಚ್ಛಿಸಿದವರು ಈ ಕೆಳಗಿನ ವೇಳಾ ಪಟ್ಟಿಯಂತೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಕಚೇರಿ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂ. 08192–262203 ಅಥವಾ ಸಹಾಯಕ ಯೋಜನಾಧಿಕಾರಿ – 88848 04177 ಗೆ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

Particulars: (1) Start date for Uploading the Tender document in e-portal: 20.11.2025 from 10:00 am Onwards. (2) Pre-Bid Meeting Date, Time & Place: 28.11.2025 at 16:00 Hr. through Direct meet in ZP Officein office working hours or through phone call. (3) Last Date for receiving pre-bid queries: 29.11.2025 Before 03:00 PM. (4) Last Date for submission of proposals in e-portal: 10.12.2025 upto16:00 Hr. (5) Opening of Technical Bids in the e-portal: 12.12.2025 @ 11:00 Hr. (6) Opening of Financial Bids of Technically qualified Bidders: 15.12.2025 @ 11:00 Hr If Possible.

ಸಹಿ/– ಮುಖ್ಯಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ,
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ

RO No. 490: DIPR/DVG/KSMCA/2025-26

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**DELHI TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY**
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**Last date for Online Registration:** 07.12.2025 (up to 11.59 p.m.)
Helpdesk Email ID: phdcoordinator@dtu.ac.in

For more information, visit the university website: www.dtu.ac.in regularly for updates and other details about the entire admission process.

## Study sheds light on women 'suffering silently'

Sexual dysfunction, From Page 3

The participants had sought help for the first time when the average duration of their marriage or relationship was 3.23 years. "This highlights the taboo around sexual health and barriers to seeking sexual health services in India, especially among women," the paper said.

The condition had left many women with a guilt that they could not satisfy their partners and this had an affect on their mental health. However, with changing times, many partners are now supporting their spouses to seek help.

"We see that many partners urge the women to speak about their condition openly and seek help from professionals. We have had men who accompany their spouses for therapy sessions. Once the diagnosis is made, the partners are supportive," said Ashima Sahore, one of the authors of the paper.

The research was done by collecting and analysing data of 313 patients with vaginismus from across five cities. This, the researchers claimed, was one of the largest data sets available on vaginismus in India.

## KSRTC wins national awards

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) said it had won two awards at the 10th Apex India Safety, Quality, HR and Business Excellence Awards and Conference 2025.

The bus operator won the Apex India Human Resources Excellence Award (Gold Category) for its human resource initiatives and the Apex India HR Excellence Award in retention strategies for ensuring transparency, speed and technology-driven processes in the recruitment of 2,600 posts.

# Right to healthy environment a fundamental right, says SC

## Sets up high-level ecosystem oversight committee

**ASHISH TRIPATHI**
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has said environmental protection is not a matter of administrative choice but a constitutional imperative, as the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution included the right to a clean, healthy and ecologically balanced environment.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta also emphasised that where environmental degradation threatens life, health and ecological balance, the state must act with urgency, competence and foresight, and constitutional courts are duty bound to intervene when such obligations are not met.

The court made the observation in an order on November 21 while setting up a high-level ecosystem oversight committee to address severe pollution in Rajasthan's Jojari, Bandi, and Luni rivers.

In the suo motu matter, the court said the contamination in the Jojari, Bandi and Luni rivers reflected a sustained 'systemic collapse' of regulatory vigilance and 'utter administrative apathy' stretching over nearly two decades.

"The present proceedings involve issues of grave concern and disastrous consequences, as a fallout of apathy at all levels which has virtually put the lives of two million people, animals and the ecosystem of three important rivers in western Rajasthan at peril," the bench said.

It said the pollution of these riverine ecosystems represented an assault not merely on natural watercourses but on the constitutional guarantees that animate and sustain the Indian Republic, that is, right to life, dignity, health, safe drinking water, ecological balance, equality, and the right of future generations to inherit an environment capable of sustaining life.

The bench said, when environmental degradation reaches such 'gargantuan proportions' that it strikes at the foundation of these guarantees, the injury transcends the ecological realm and becomes a direct constitutional injury requiring immediate, comprehensive and effective judicial redress, the bench said.

The bench appointed Justice Sangeet Lodha, a retired judge of the Rajasthan High Court, as the chairperson of the high-level ecosystem oversight committee.

In the terms of reference, the court said, among others, the committee would prepare a scientifically grounded, time-bound river restoration and rejuvenation blueprint for the river system and formulate a comprehensive plan for its execution in coordination with the state.

The court said the committee would undertake a comprehensive mapping of all legal and illegal points of discharge into these rivers and place its recommendations and findings in that regard before the court.

## Winter Session: Bill on civil...

Chandigarh, From Page 3

However, the Chandigarh Bill, seeking to include Chandigarh in Article 240 of the Constitution and align its administration with that of other Union Territories without legislatures like Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu -- as well as Puducherry when its Assembly is dissolved or suspended, has triggered strong reaction in Punjab.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann opposed the Bill in "strongest terms", saying it is against the "interests" of the state and they will "not allow the conspiracy being hatched" by the Union government to succeed in any way.

"Chandigarh, built by razing our Punjab's villages, belongs solely to Punjab. We will not let our right slip away just like that. For this, we will take whatever steps are necessary," he said. Punjab Congress president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring said any attempt to "snatch" Chandigarh from Punjab will be resisted..

Akali Dal also came out against the proposed Bill, saying it is "against the interest of Punjab" and would amount to the Centre going back on its commitments made to Punjab regarding the transfer of Chandigarh to the state.

Party chief Sukhbhir Singh Badal said the previous Congress governments in Delhi have discriminated against Punjab and deprived them of their capital city.

"This Bill further seeks to remove whatever little administrative and political control Punjab has over Chandigarh and would permanently extinguish Punjab's claim to Chandigarh as its capital city," he said.

Another major Bill listed for this session, which starts on December 1 and ends on December 19, is The Atomic Energy Bill 2025 that seeks to "govern the use and regulation" of atomic energy in the country. It is expected to provide provisions for opening up the nuclear power generation to the private sector.

Also high on agenda is The Higher Education Commission of India Bill 2025 aims to set up a Commission to facilitate the universities and other higher educational institutions to become independent self-governing institutions.

To ensure faster and transparent land acquisition for National Highways, the government intends to amend the existing National Highways Act while certain amendments are being made to the Companies Act 2013 and LLP Act 2008 through The Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill 2025 to facilitate Ease of Doing Business. To frame a single law to deal with the securities market, the government intends to consolidate the provisions of the SEBI Act 1992, Depositories Act 1996 and Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act 1956. To deepen penetration, accelerate growth and development of the insurance sector and enhance ease of doing business, The Insurance Laws (Amendment) Bill is being planned.

## FISHING IN 'TROUBLED' WATERS

**Fishermen navigate through polluted foam as they cast nets to catch fish in the Yamuna river near Kalindi Kunj in New Delhi on Saturday.** PTI PHOTO

# Beating heat wave: TN's cool-roof initiative for govt schools

CHENNAI, DHNS

With heat becoming unbearable due to a host of reasons including the effects of climate change, the Tamil Nadu government is working towards keeping classrooms cool by implementing a high-impact cool roof initiative at a government school here to bring down the temperature. The project is being implemented at the Perunthalaivar Kamarajar Government Girls Higher Secondary School in Ambattur in collaboration with the UNEP Cool Coalition.

**High-impact cool roof initiative at a government school.**
PHOTO CREDIT: UNEP

A 3,206 sq. m roof area across six academic blocks has been coated with high solar-reflective paint, with early results showing that temperatures have dropped by over 5 degree Celsius. Indoor temperatures are expected to fall by 1.5 degree Celsius to 3 degree Celsius, directly improving comfort and learning for students.

Once the results of the pilot are available, the government aims to install cool roofs on approximately 300 schools statewide as part of the Green School initiative. The new initiative comes after the Tamil Nadu government's cool roof project implemented in a residential area in Chennai's Perumbakkam was recognised by the UNEP.

"Keeping classrooms cool is becoming critical as heat is increasing due to climate change. The intervention is projected to provide 15 to 20 per cent more thermal comfort hours and over 10 per cent energy savings, while also helping to reduce the urban heat-island effect," said Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary (Environment & Forests), Tamil Nadu.

Results from the study will help the government scale up cool roofs to 300 schools under the Green School initiative, advancing climate-resilient and healthy learning environments across Tamil Nadu, Sahu added.

The high-impact cool roof initiative in schools is part of a slew of measures that the Tamil Nadu government has been taking to mitigate the effects of climate change. The state government declared heat wave as a disaster and announced a solatium of Rs 5 lakh to the families of those who died of extreme heat as it continues to experience extreme weather events.

High intensity rainfall in less duration has become the order of the day with the number of hot days increasing, the number of rainy days declining, while the average rainfall remains the same.

While high solar-reflective paint (SRI 101) was used in the school, high Solar Reflective Index (SRI) of 102, was applied to two residential blocks comprising 200 houses in Perumbakkam. This passive cooling intervention led to a temperature reduction of 5 degree Celsius to 8 degree Celsius inside the buildings during peak summer months, the UNEP's Cool Coalition said.

# Stalin seeks PM's intervention over TN metro proposal

## DMK men hit streets over Centre returning DPRs

**E T B SIVAPRIYAN**
CHENNAI, DHNS

Building metro rail networks in Coimbatore and Madurai has become the latest flashpoint between the DMK dispensation in Tamil Nadu and the BJP-led Union government.

After DMK men hit the streets in Coimbatore and Madurai against the Centre returning DPRs for the projects, Chief Minister M K Stalin on Saturday dashed off a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking to reconsider the decision and allow the two cities to experience the modern transport system.

A row kicked up earlier this week after the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs "returned" the DPRs of Madurai and Coimbatore metro, saying the cities do not meet the 20 lakh population criteria under the National Metro Rail Policy, 2017.

The DMK was quick to term Centre's action as a "disgraceful approach" and "distortion of federal principles" with Stalin even suggesting that Tamil Nadu was being denied metro networks because the state voted for the DMK in 2021 and overwhelmingly rejected the BJP and AIADMK in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

After Union Minister Manohar Lal said the DPRs had many discrepancies, Stalin asked the Department of Special Initiatives to submit detailed justifications on the issues raised by MoHUA.

"I urge you to instruct MoHUA to review the decision... If necessary, I am ready to meet you at New Delhi with my team to explain the issues in detail. Since these two projects involve the aspirations of the industrial and cultural hubs of Tamil Nadu, I look forward to your personal intervention in this issue," Stalin told the Prime Minister.

DMK views the Centre's move as an opportunity to politically target the BJP and brand the saffron party as "anti-Tamil Nadu" to further fuel its "Tamil Nadu versus Delhi (Centre/BJP)" narrative for the 2026 Assembly polls.

In his letter, Stalin said Tamil Nadu, being the most urbanised state in the country with a high per capita private vehicle ownership, needs high-capacity public transport alternatives in all its large growth engine cities.

He said the population of the Coimbatore LPA area had exceeded 2 million way back in 2011 itself, and in the case of Madurai too, the expected population is likely to exceed it now, and he pointed out that if the two-million criteria had been applied uniformly, many metros in Tier-II cities like Agra, Indore, and Patna may not have materialised.

"The selective application of this criterion to our proposal has created an impression of discrimination against our cities, and the Union government needs to dispel it by treating our cities on par with the cities mentioned above," Stalin said.

## Share satellite data with developing world: PM to G20

G20, From Page 3

He said that the Global Traditional Knowledge Repository under the G20 framework could be built on India's own knowledge systems initiative, and the global platform would help transmit the collective wisdom of humanity to future generations.

Advancing Africa's development and empowering its young talent is in the interest of the entire world, the prime minister said, noting that the proposed G20–Africa Skills Multiplier Initiative could operate under a 'train-the-trainers' model across various sectors with all G20 partners financing and supporting this effort.

"Our collective goal will be to prepare one million certified trainers in Africa over the next decade. These trainers will, in turn, help equip millions of young people with skills. This initiative will have a powerful multiplier effect. It will strengthen local capacity and significantly contribute to Africa's long-term development," said Modi.

The prime minister noted that drug trafficking, particularly the rapid spread of highly lethal substances like fentanyl, had emerged as a serious challenge to public health, social stability, and global security and also served as a significant channel for financing terrorism.

To effectively address this global threat, the proposed G20 Initiative on Countering the Drug–Terror Nexus would bring together various instruments related to finance, governance, and security to weaken the drug-terror economy effectively.

The G20 Global Healthcare Response Team would comprise trained medical experts from the G20 countries and be prepared for rapid deployment in the event of any global health crisis or natural disaster, he said, adding that the proposed G20 Open Satellite Data Partnership would make the satellite data of the space agencies of all member nations in the bloc available to developing countries for agriculture, fisheries, disaster management and other activities.

The G20 Critical Minerals Circularity Initiative would foster recycling, urban mining, second-life battery projects and innovation of various types, and help in strengthening supply chain security, and develop cleaner pathways of development, said the prime minister.

Modi had meetings with Ramaphosa on the sidelines of the summit, as well as with French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

DH
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SAD DEMISE

Marcia Lewin
26th Sep 1937 - 21st Nov 2025
W/o Late Cmde R. D. Lewin (I.N. Rtd)
Schedule - 23rd November 2025
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM Viewing at Residence.
2:00 PM Funeral Mass,
St. Vincent Pallotti Church



Sr.MARY LOUISE SMMI
DOB: 19.08.1932 - DOD: 22.11. 2025
Funeral Mass at 11:00 am on 23-11-2025 at St. Mary's Convent Chamrajpet, Bangalore-18
Deeply mourned by : SMMI Sisters

OBITUARY



Mary Agnes D'Souza
January 4, 1943 – November 18, 2025
"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble"
Funeral Service on November 24, 2025, 3:00 pm at St. Michael's Church, Shanthinagar, Bangalore.
Burial at St. Patrick's Cemetery, Hosur Road, Gate No. 6
Inserted by: Family

## 8 held for kidnapping...

Kidnap, From Page 3

The amount was transferred to four different bank accounts held by relatives of the accused. The gang was reportedly continuing to demand hard cash when the police intervened.

DCP Fatima confirmed the arrests, noting that all eight accused hailed from Kolar district.

"We received 112 call alert around 4.30 am and immediately constituted four specialised teams to track the gang down. The flow of digitally transferred money proved crucial in locating the accused," the DCP said.

The subsequent raid led to the successful apprehension of the entire eight-member gang. Some of the arrested individuals have been identified as Pavan, Bharath, Atif and Prasanna. The names of others are yet to be ascertained. All accused were aged between 27 and 30 years, the officer added.

The police have also seized two vehicles used in the crime—an Innova and a Wagon R. A case has been registered at the Koramangala police station.

# Tejas crash: IAF pilot's village in Himachal mourns a life lost too soon

DHARMASALA/
HAMIRPUR, PTI

For the people of Patiyalkar, a sleepy village in Himachal Pradesh's Kangra district, the news of the death of local hero Namansh Syal, the IAF Wing Commander killed after a Tejas fighter jet crashed during an aerial display at the Dubai Air Show on Saturday, is yet to sink in.

**Wing Commander Namansh Syal**

For most of them, Namansh, who was in his mid-30s, remains an outstanding athlete distinguished by his dedication to the country, "who even set an example in death by diverting the aircraft to save thousands present at the mega air show".

Since early Saturday, heart-wrenching scenes have been witnessed at the Syal household in the Nagrota Bagwan area, with villagers trying to console the wailing family members mourning a life lost too soon.

Jogindernath Syal, Namansh's uncle, said that the mortal remains of the wing commander reached the Sulur Air Force station near Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu around 9 am on Saturday, from where they will be flown to the Gaggal airport in Kangra on Sunday.

Jogindernath came to know about the crash on Friday afternoon after Namansh's father, who was not at home at the time, called him and asked if he had any information about the incident.

"My wife rushed to their tenant, who works in Qatar and had come to the village on a holiday. After scanning the latest news on the internet, he confirmed that it was Namansh who was flying the jet that crashed."

"I immediately contacted my brother to give him the tragic news. Initially, he did not believe what I said, and came to terms with reality only after I told him that it was confirmed information," he said.

Namansh is survived by his father, mother, wife, who is also serving in the Air Force, and their six-year-old daughter. Namansh and his wife met during their first posting in Pathankot, and later got married in 2014.

"As soon as I came to know about the crash, I contacted Namansh's family members. Initially, we thought he was injured. Sadly, we were wrong... A promising career came to an abrupt end," Nagrota Bagwan SDM Manish Kumar Sharma said.

Namansh's alma mater, the Sainik School at Sujanpur Tira in neighbouring Hamirpur district, is also struggling to come to terms with the tragic passing of one of its illustrious alumni. On Saturday, a special prayer meeting was held at the school during which principal Rachna Joshi and other teachers fondly remembered their former student.

## ◆ WEATHER ◆

**Overview:** Rainfall occurred at few places over Coastal Karnataka and dry weather prevailed over South Interior and North Interior Karnataka
**Forecast Nov 23:** Rainfall to occur at few places over the state.

**INTERIOR NORTH**

| Stations | Max | Min | Rain |
|---|---|---|---|
| Belagavi | 30.4 | 18.8 | 00 |
| Bidar | 28.8 | 15.2 | 00 |
| Vijayapura | 31 | 16 | 00 |
| Dharwad | 31 | 18.2 | 00 |
| Haveri | 30.8 | 20.4 | 00 |
| Kalaburagi | 33.3 | 19.8 | 00 |
| Raichur | 31.6 | 20 | 00 |
| **COASTAL** | | | |
| Honnavar | 35.5 | 24 | 00 |
| Karwar | 36.2 | 24.6 | 00 |
| Shirali | NA | NA | NA |
| Mangaluru | 34.4 | 26 | 00 |

**INTERIOR SOUTH**

| Stations | Max | Min | Rain |
|---|---|---|---|
| Agumbe | NA | NA | 00 |
| Bengaluru | 28.1 | 19.2 | 1.2 |
| Ballari | NA | NA | NA |
| Chamarajanagar | NA | NA | NA |
| Chikkamagaluru | NA | NA | NA |
| Chitradurga | 27.5 | 20.5 | 1.6 |
| Davangere | 30.5 | 15.5 | 01 |
| Hassan | 32.8 | NA | 00 |
| Mysuru | 30 | 20 | 00 |
| Madikeri | NA | NA | NA |
| Kolar | 27.6 | 18.8 | 13.4 |

**OTHER STATIONS**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| New Delhi | 28.2 | 11.8 | 00 |
| Kolkata | 29.5 | 18.6 | 00 |
| Mumbai | 33.9 | 19.6 | 00 |
| Chennai | 31.6 | 25 | 03 |
| Pune | 30.4 | 14.4 | 00 |
| Hyderabad | 29.6 | 19.4 | 00 |
| Th'puram | 33.3 | 23.8 | 46 |

**SACRED MATTERS** Court-ordered probes underway into 'fake' ghee, theft of offerings

# Political storm hits Tirumala: Twin scandals stir faith, fury

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

**TEMPLE TURMOIL**

- **CM Chandrababu Naidu alleges animal-fat adulteration in Tirumala laddus under YSRCP rule.**
- Probe says suppliers delivered fake ghee (60+ lakh kg) made from palm-oil blends worth Rs 250 crore.
- **TDP-JSP-BJP call it "sacrilege"; YSRCP says allegations are selective leaks and political targeting.**
- Staffer caught stealing dollars; probe reopens amid claims of Rs 100+ crore missing during YSRCP tenure.
- **Experts warn the sacred temple is becoming a battleground for religiously charged politics.**

The Tirumala Sri Venkateswara Temple.

When Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu last September accused the previous YSRCP government of using animal fat-laced ghee in the sacred Tirumala laddus, the allegations were explosive.

They are no ordinary laddus: They are considered a sacred blessing from Lord Venkateswara — a symbol of faith for over 2.5 crore pilgrims who visit the hill shrine every year.

So, Naidu's charge that the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) administration under the Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy government compromised this offering hit not just political circles but also the spiritual beliefs of crores. The YSRCP response was quick: Its leaders called the charge an insult to faith and a calculated act of political blasphemy. However, Naidu stood his ground, claiming laboratory tests showed traces of animal-origin fat in the ghee supplied to the TTD between 2019 and 2024.

What began as a political slugfest soon reached the Supreme Court, which in October 2024 ordered a Special Investigation Team (SIT) led by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to probe the claims. The panel consisted of two CBI officials, two state police officers, and a member of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

### Probe findings

The SIT's findings were shocking. According to a remand report filed in a local court, the companies that supplied ghee to the TTD during the YSRCP tenure never procured any milk. Yet, they delivered more than 60 lakh kg "ghee", worth nearly Rs 250 crore.

Investigators said one firm, based near Roorkee in Uttarakhand, allegedly manufactured ghee using a mix of palm oil, palm kernel oil, and palm-olein, with beta-carotene and synthetic flavouring to mimic aroma and texture. The report further claimed the counterfeit ghee reached Tirumala through various intermediaries and was used for not just laddus but also other temple offerings.

The findings ignited a fierce political storm. The TDP-Jana Sena-BJP alliance labelled it "one of the biggest acts of sacrilege" in the state's history. YSRCP leaders, however, insist that the controversy was nothing more than a political stunt. Ex-minister Vellampalli Srinivas accused the ruling alliance of "dragging God into politics" to distract from administrative shortcomings. He argued that the SIT report was not officially released, but only selected parts were leaked to malign Jagan. He added that the YSRCP government actually paid higher prices — Rs 319 per kg — as compared to Naidu's previous term.

YSRCP general secretary Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy also accused Naidu of misleading the media and the public for political gain, adding that TTD ex-chairman Y V Subba Reddy had already blacklisted a company over quality issues.

### Parakamani theft

Running parallel is an equally sensational case — the alleged Parakamani theft. Parakamani is the temple's crucial operation of the counting and segregation of devotees' offerings — from gold and silver to cash, including foreign currency. It happens in the New Parakamani Complex on the hill under heavy security and supervision.

On April 29, 2023, a staff member from the Pedda Jeeyangar Mutt, C V Ravi Kumar, was caught stealing Rs 72,000 in dollars from the Parakamani. The money was recovered, and a complaint was filed the next day. Yet, the case was swiftly settled through the Lok Adalat. The decision is now under scrutiny, after the TTD's then assistant vigilance and security officer Y Satish Kumar's death earlier this month.

The AP High Court directed the CID to reopen the case and launch a probe. Meanwhile, TTD board member G Bhanu Prakash Reddy claimed over Rs 100 crore was stolen from the Parakamani during the YSRCP's tenure. A TTD vigilance report revealed Ravi Kumar's and his wife's immovable properties, including land and buildings in Tirupati and Chennai, were donated to the TTD. Most remarkably, he donated 14 apartments, worth crores in the open market, to the TTD.

### Other considerations

At the heart of both matters lies one of Hinduism's holiest sites, the Tirumala Sri Venkateswara Temple, widely regarded as "Kaliyuga Vaikuntha", the Earthly abode of Lord Vishnu in this age. And the ruling coalition appears to have latched onto it to target the YSRCP.

"Both probes were ordered by courts. Where is the politics in it?" asked TDP spokesperson and AP State Biodiversity Board Chairman Neelayapalem Vijay Kumar in conversation with *DH*. Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan described the alleged adulteration as "an unforgivable breach of trust".

Political analyst Telakapalli Ravi called Tirupati "the new gateway of religious politics in the South". In his view, while probing the matters was essential, communal polarisation must be prevented.

"Parties framing this as Jagan's 'Christian' regime hurting Hindu sentiments is unwarranted," he told *DH*. "Civil society, religious institutions, and the judiciary must ensure political mudslinging doesn't overshadow the sanctity of the investigation."

# Cong forms DMK seat-sharing team

**CHENNAI, DHNS:** Putting an end to all speculation on alliance, the Congress has constituted a five-member committee to hold talks with the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) on the modalities of the electoral understanding, including seat-sharing for the 2026 assembly polls.

The committee will be chaired by Girish Raya Chodankar, AICC in-charge for TN and Puducherry, and consists of state unit chief K Selvaperunthagai, Congress floor leader in Assembly Rajesh Kumar, Suraj Hegde, and Nivedith Alva, the last two from Karnataka. The first meeting will be held on Sunday during which the date to meet DMK leaders will be decided.

Sources told *DH* that the committee was constituted after the DMK leadership sought clarity on the alliance between the two parties from the Congress High Command. The development comes close on the heels of intense speculation that the Congress cadres want to ally with Vijay's Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) for the 2026 elections.

"A member from the DMK's first family met AICC chief Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi earlier this week, seeking to clear the confusion. The family member carried a message from DMK chief M K Stalin and conveyed it to both," a source aware of the developments told *DH*.

### DMK miffed

The DMK was not happy with the speculation that Congress was warming up to Vijay, conveyed its displeasure, and said the onus was on the national outfit to clarify its position. "We had to put an end to the speculation as some of our leaders gave credence to it by praising Vijay. Though there was no plan to break away from the DMK alliance, the recent developments warranted a reassurance, and this committee addresses that need," another source said.

A senior party leader told *DH* that the DMK has indicated that they will not have any issue in allotting the same number of seats that alliance parties contested in 2021. "However, almost all political parties want more seats. These will be discussed during seat-sharing talks," the leader added.

# Congress undecided over MNS entry into MVA

**MUMBAI, DHNS:** Weeks ahead of the announcement of elections to local bodies across Maharashtra, the Congress on Saturday seemed divided over whether to take along the Raj Thackeray-led MNS.

As the Maha Vikas Aghadi prepares for the big battle after the massive losses it suffered in the 2024 Maharashtra Legislative Assembly elections, Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray has strongly pitched for the MNS' inclusion in the Opposition grouping.

Meanwhile, NCP (SP) supremo Sharad Pawar appeared inclined to expand the alliance further.

On Saturday, Congress Legislative Party leader Vijay Wadettiwar seemed to soften his stand in the wake of the party's debacle in the Bihar Legislative Assembly elections.

"Ultimately, ideology matters. We are positive towards a united fight, including the MNS. Everyone must come together to defeat the BJP," said the two-time former Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly.

In fact, earlier, state Congress president Harshavardhan Sapkal and his Mumbai counterpart and MP, Prof Varsha Gaikwad, expressed opposition to it.

Referring to Wadettiwar's remarks, Gaikwad said he spoke about alliances at the state level, while the party's Mumbai unit had already made its stand clear that it would not align with the MNS for the BMC polls.

# J&K Police arrests man in 'white collar' terror module case

**Tufail Niyaz Bhat held as part of ongoing probe**

SRINAGAR, PTI

Armed security personnel inspect a car along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway amid tightened security measures, in Kulgam district, on Saturday. PTI

**Property of terror handler attached**

Police in J&K's Pulwama district on Saturday attached the property of a terror handler operating from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, officials said, reports PTI. Police attached the immovable property at Syedabad Pastoona in the Tral area of the south Kashmir district.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police's State Investigation Agency(SIA) arrested a man here on Saturday in connection with a 'white collar' terror module case, officials said.

The arrested person has been identified as Tufail Niyaz Bhat, a resident of the Batamaloo area of the city here. He was arrested as part of the ongoing investigation into the 'white collar' terror module case, the officials added.

The entire module was busted after the Srinagar Police began an investigation into the pasting of posters that threatened police and security forces on walls in Bunpora, Nowgam, in mid-October.

Senior Superintendent of Police (Srinagar) Dr G V Sundeep Chakravarthy personally led the investigation, and the CCTV footage analysis led to the arrest of the first three suspects — Arif Nisar Dar alias Sahil, Yasir-ul-Ashraf, and Maqsood Ahmad Dar.

Their interrogation led to the arrest of Maulvi Irfan Ahmad, a former paramedic turned Imam, who allegedly supplied the posters and radicalised the doctors.

The trail led the investigators to Al Falah University in Faridabad, where Dr Muzzafar Ganaie and Dr Shaheen Sayeed were arrested, and 2,900 kg of explosive material was seized.

# CJI-designate to prioritise reducing pendency of cases

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** Chief Justice of India-designate Justice Surya Kant on Saturday said his priorities would be to reduce the pendency of cases and focus on promoting mediation for the resolution of disputes.

"My foremost agenda is to reduce arrears. Two things are my priorities. The number of cases has crossed 90,000 in the Supreme Court at present. I must target reducing pendency depending on the optimal utilisation of judges. Mediation can be a key to the solution," he said in an informal interaction with reporters at his residence here.

Justice Kant also said he would prioritise 30-year-old cases, emphasising at the same time on setting up more constitutional-bench matters.

"I will be setting up constitutional benches on priority to decide on such questions of law because of which high courts and lower courts are unable to make a decision," he said.

**JUSTICE SURYA KANT**
CJI-designate

"I will be setting up constitutional benches on priority to decide on such questions of law because of which high courts and lower courts are unable to make a decision

He also stressed mediation, saying it could be a game-changer and a solution to most woes. "The entire country is talking about mediation today. Mediation has really picked up momentum. I think mediation is the need of the hour," he said.

With the government being the biggest litigator, Justice Kant said he would try to persuade it and its agencies to come forward for mediation.

As for the issue of social-media trolling of SC judges, he said he had never been under pressure at any point in his entire career due to social media trolls.

"I don't think a judge or the CJI comes under pressure due to social media or 'unsocial media'. I never carry any burden from these people. Just ignore them. Just focus on work," he said.

On the issue of the centralisation of HC benches, he said these were somewhat sensitive issues and didn't come under the jurisdiction of the court.

On the issue of Artificial Intelligence (AI), the CJI-designate said it was a grey area.

"We will have to look at the boundaries; how much AI we need in the judicial process. We will take a holistic and comprehensive view and talk to the bar (advocates) in this regard," he said.

Justice Kant is set to assume charge as the 53rd CJI on Monday. He will demit office on February 9, 2027.

## IN BRIEF

### Cong plans 'vote chori' rally in Delhi on Dec 14

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** Congress will hold a rally against 'vote chori' (vote theft) in Delhi's Ramlila Maidan on December 14, as it intends to take forward the protest highlighting the signatures it collected from across the country. Party president Mallikarjun Kharge and senior leader Rahul Gandhi will attend the rally christened 'Vote Chor, Gaddi Chhor' (Vote thief, leave the throne), which the grand old party says is "only the beginning" of their fight to reclaim democracy.

### Jan Suraaj dissolves all party units

**PATNA, PTI:** The Prashant Kishor-led Jan Suraaj Party on Saturday dissolved all its organisational units, from the panchayat level to the state level, following the humiliating performance in the Bihar polls. Jan Suraaj spokesperson Syed Masih Uddin said new units will be formed in the next one and a half months.

### Hyd Umrah victims laid to rest in Madinah

**HYDERABAD, DHNS:** The last rites for the Hyderabad Umrah pilgrims who died in the recent bus accident near Madinah were performed on Saturday at Jannatul Baqi, following the Salat al-Janazah, the Islamic funeral prayer at the Prophet's Mosque. Andhra Pradesh Governor Justice S Abdul Nazeer attended the funeral prayers and burial, along with the victims' relatives, the Indian Embassy said. Forty-four Indians were killed in a collision involving their bus and a fuel tanker near Madina on November 17.

# 37 Maoists surrender in Telangana

**HYDERABAD, DHNS:** Thirty-seven members of the CPI (Maoist), including three state committee members, surrendered before the Telangana DGP on Saturday.

They handed eight firearms, including one AK-47 rifle, two SLRS, four .303 rifles and one G3 rifle, along with 343 live ammunition of various calibres.

Telangana DGP B Shivadhar Reddy said the CPI (Maoist) is facing a significant decline in organisational strength and operational capabilities.

Over the recent years, the outfit has been under sustained pressure from security forces, resulting in the disruption of key networks, reduced mobility, and shrinking support bases.

Ideological divergences have emerged within the organisation, creating dissatisfaction among cadres regarding the relevance and direction of the movement. The gap between the leadership's theoretical positions and the harsh ground realities has led to disillusionment, especially among senior members who have spent decades underground.

The situation has been further aggravated by internal rifts within the leadership and various formations of the CPI (Maoist), leading to factional disputes, mistrust, and lack of strategic clarity, said the DGP.

Inspired by the holistic and comprehensive strategy of the Telangana Police towards underground cadre of the CPI (Maoist), a total of 465 UG cadre surrendered before Telangana police in 2025.

# Cong questions effectiveness of new labour codes

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** Congress on Saturday said the implementation of new labour codes is being touted as 'some revolutionary reform', but the question is, will it ensure a minimum wage of Rs 400/day, an employment guarantee law for urban poor and Rs 25 lakh universal health coverage? The Modi dispensation must learn from the Congress government in Karnataka and its former government in Rajasthan, which pioneered labour reforms.

Congress General Secretary, Jairam Ramesh, said, "29 existing labour-related laws have been re-packaged into 4 codes. This is being marketed as a revolutionary reform when even the rules have yet to be notified."

# Bengal: 3rd BLO dies by suicide, blames EC in note

**KOLKATA, DHNS:** As another woman engaged as a Booth Level Officer (BLO) for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in West Bengal died by suicide, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee blamed the Election Commission (EC) for her death and asked how many lives should be lost for the exercise.

"How many more lives will be lost? How many more need to die for this SIR?" Mamata wrote on X, after the body of Rinku Tarafdar, 52, a part-time school teacher engaged by the EC as a BLO, was found dead at her residence in Krishnanagar on Saturday.

Tarafdar, according to police, left a suicide note, alleging: "The EC is responsible for my fate".

"I cannot bear the inhuman workload. I am a part-time teacher, and my salary is very low compared to my effort, yet they will not relieve me. I had completed 95% of the offline work, but I was unable to manage the online tasks. Despite informing the BDO office and my supervisor, no action was taken," she alleged.

Tarafdar was the third BLO to die after the EC launched the SIR.

The CEO asked the District Election Officer of Nadia to send a report on the death of the BLO in Krishnanagar.

Bangladeshi nationals who allegedly entered India illegally wait to return to their homeland in West Bengal. PTI

### 2 BLOs die in MP

Two teachers-cum-Booth Level Officers (BLOs) tasked with conducting a voter list survey for the SIR died of "illness" in the Raisen and Damoh districts of Madhya Pradesh on Friday, officials said. Relatives and friends of the deceased BLOs, however, blamed heavy workload and pressure to meet enumeration targets as the reasons for the deaths.
(*With PTI inputs*)

# Yogi orders for detention centres to house 'infiltrators'

**LUCKNOW, PTI:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has issued instructions to all district magistrates in the state to take strict action against illegal immigrants, an official statement said.

He stated that law and order and national security are top priorities, and that any form of illegal activity will not be tolerated, it added.

"The chief minister has directed that each district administration ensure the identification of illegal immigrants," the statement read.

"The chief minister has also directed that temporary detention centres be established to house infiltrators," it added.

PAKISTAN POWERPLAY | The 27th Amendment exposes rifts in military top brass

# Sweeping constitutional changes may deepen Munir's insecurities

RANA BANERJI

There is understandable consternation among sections of Pakistan's intelligentsia and legal fraternity over the manner in which the 27th Constitutional Amendment has accelerated the slide towards authoritarianism. Apart from further emasculating an already defanged judiciary through the establishment of a Constitutional Court of handpicked judges, it also ventures dangerously into Article 243 to define new powers for President Trump's much-lauded Field Marshal, General Asim Munir.

Key changes in Article 243 specify that the Army Chief will henceforth be recognised as the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), positioned at the helm of Pakistan's armed services. The 'rationale' offered for the amendment is that modern warfare has changed drastically, requiring greater integration, synergy, joint planning, inter-service cooperation, and strategic alignment between conventional, cyber and nuclear commands. Lifetime immunity is also granted to all five-star ranks, including those promoted from the Air Force and the Navy.

The office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC)—designed to ensure coordination among the Army, Navy and Air Force, and serving as the symbolic head of the armed services for over four decades—will be abolished once the incumbent, General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, retires on 27 November 2025. The position was rotational until 1997, after which the Army reserved the four-star slot for itself. Although technically positioned at the apex of Pakistan's nuclear command and control, the CJCSC's role remained largely ceremonial in practice.

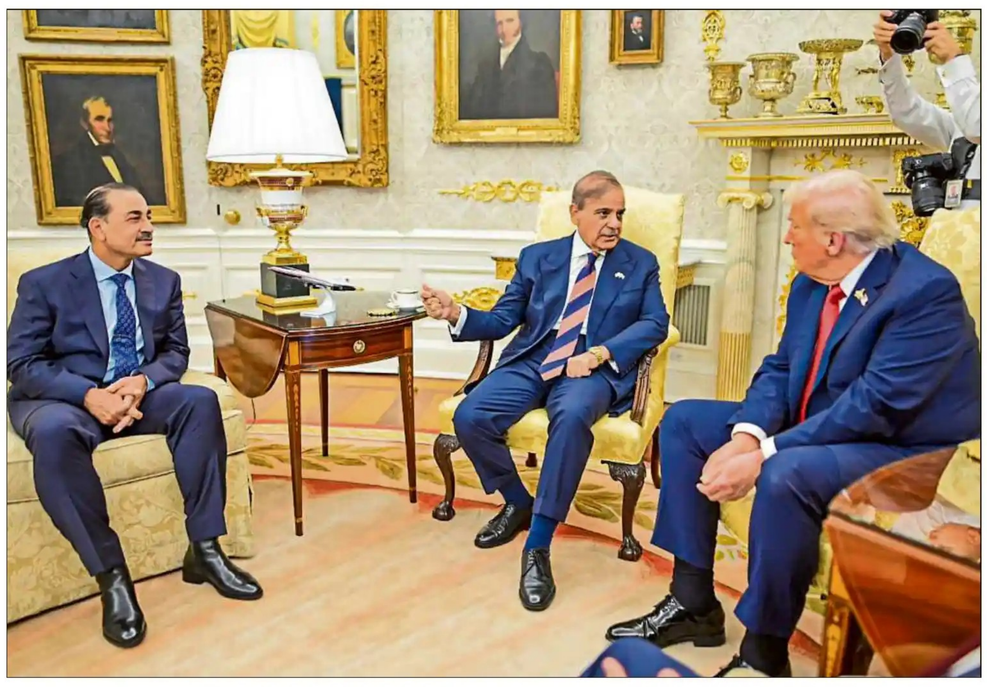
Mirza enjoys high respect among his peer group of Generals. As the seniormost officer of the 76th Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) Kakul Long Course, he has had an exceptional career—serving as Director General Military Operations (DGMO) before promotion to three-star rank, later becoming Chief of General Staff (CGS), and subsequently Corps Commander, X Corps, Rawalpindi under General Bajwa. He was one of the main contenders for the top post over an ostensibly senior Officers Training School (OTS) entrant, Asim Munir, in November 2022.

While there was no open confrontation between Munir and Mirza, relations remained frosty. During the tumultuous days of May 2023, rumours circulated that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former Prime Minister Imran Khan had encouraged Mirza to overthrow Munir while the latter was abroad. Mirza did not oblige.

Under the amendment, a Commander of National Strategic Command (CNSC) will be appointed, though it remains unclear whether this will be a four-star position. Other questions also remain unanswered: what will be the future role of existing three-star functionaries such as the Director General, Joint Staff or the Director General, Operations at the CJCSC headquarters in Chaklala? Where will the newly announced Army Strategic Rocket Force fit in? Will the Strategic Plans Division undergo restructuring?

Munir is keeping his cards close to his chest regarding this reorganisation. He must weigh the discontent of senior Generals of the 80th PMA, who now face a career dead-end. Lieutenant General Asim Malik, currently Director General Inter-Services Intelligence (DG ISI), is considered very close to him. However, the October 2025 notification retaining him as DG ISI and as National Security Adviser suggests he has effectively retired after a four-year term.

Extensions are rarely popular among peers, and a promotion to a four-star slot now appears unlikely.



Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif (centre) introduces Field Marshal Asim Munir (left) to US President Donald Trump at the White House in Washington, DC. PTI FILE

Interestingly, the Islamabad Post carried a post on X (9 November) alleging that "internal rifts" within the Army had reached "a critical point", turning the changes from "administrative reform" into "a contest of influence, power and strategic anxiety".

Meanwhile, the court martial of another former rival, Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed, has concluded. Reports suggest a harsh verdict may be forthcoming, but Munir will need to assess the simmering resentment within the ranks before making the decision public.

Though Air Chief Babar Sidhu may also receive a five-year extension, junior officers of the Air Force and Navy are disgruntled. They traditionally resist enforced jointness and view the amendment as yet another ploy by the Army to centralise control.

### Implications for India

India has dealt with military rulers in Pakistan before. Even as they consolidated power domestically, they often attempted to evolve as statesmen—taking steps to moderate the tense political climate between the two adversarial neighbours. This occurred after President Zia-ul-Haq's cricket diplomacy in February 1987. Despite the ignominy of being the architect of Kargil, General Pervez Musharraf undertook a diplomatic visit to Agra in 2001 (albeit unsuccessfully). Later, during India's 2006 cricket tour of Pakistan, he famously complimented M S Dhoni's long hair. His "four-point formula" on Kashmir gained significant traction during the Track II discussions between Tariq Aziz and Satinder Lambah (2005–2007).

Munir's case appears different. He has had to carefully position loyal Generals following the May 2023 disturbances instigated by the PTI. Throughout his three years as Army Chief, he has had to constantly look over his shoulder—both inside the institution and outside—to counter Imran Khan's enduring popularity. This insecurity persists despite his extension, granted through amendments to the Army Act, 1952, potentially allowing him to remain in office until 2030.

The Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) government, led by the compliant Shahbaz Sharif, has readily fallen in line, lacking legitimacy after the February 2024 elections.

Munir's recent speeches—at the Overseas Pakistani Convention in Islamabad (April 2025), and before Pakistani diaspora gatherings in Florida, US, and Brussels (August 2025)—revealed a narrowly India-centric worldview typical of many younger Army officers. He threatened nuclear devastation against India. Addressing PMA cadets at Kakul (October 2025), he asserted that "there is no scope for war in a nuclearised environment", yet simultaneously warned of "a decisive, beyond-proportions response".

In this backdrop, India cannot afford complacency and must focus relentlessly on expeditious force modernisation while plugging operational gaps wherever urgently required.

*(The writer retired as special secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat)*

# Territorial expansion by force unacceptable: G20

## Declaration stresses peace and multilateralism

JOHANNESBURG, PTI

In a strong message, the G20 on Saturday said that all states must refrain from the threat or use of force to seek territorial acquisition against the territorial integrity, sovereignty or political independence of any state.

A declaration adopted with consensus by the heads of state attending the G20 Leaders' Summit—despite attempts by the US to block it—also said that states should develop friendly relations among nations, including by promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

The declaration further acknowledged the impact of rising geopolitical and geo-economic competition, noting that solidarity, equality and sustainability are essential pillars of inclusive growth. Energy security, climate action, and disaster resilience and response were also prominently highlighted in the 39-page document.

In a clear reference to Russia, Israel and Myanmar, without naming them, the declaration said that, in line with the UN Charter, "all states must refrain from the threat or use of force to seek territorial acquisition against the territorial integrity and sovereignty or political independence of any state".

Normally, the adoption of the declaration happens at the end of the Leaders' Summit. This year, however, it was adopted at the start of the meeting. "We understand our interconnectedness as a global community of nations and reaffirm our commitment to ensure that no one is left behind through multilateral cooperation, macro-policy coordination, global partnerships for sustainable development and solidarity," the declaration stated.

It acknowledged rising instability driven by geopolitical and geo-economic rivalry, heightened conflicts and wars, deepening inequality, and growing global economic uncertainty and fragmentation. "In the face of this challenging political and socio-economic environment, we underscore our belief in multilateral cooperation to collectively address shared challenges," it said.

Activists stage a protest demanding taxation of the super-rich on the opening day of the G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg on Saturday. REUTERS

# UK blocks export of unique series of 200-year-old Hindu paintings

**LONDON, PTI:** The UK government has placed an export bar this week on a series of 200-year-old bold and colourful paintings that are said to depict one of the most important narratives in Hinduism.

A buyer is being sought to keep the set of 56 paintings, valued at around 280,000 pounds, representing the origins and triumphs of Devi, or the Divine Mother.

In the unique series, gold and silver paint are used across the 56 images to portray scenes that range from quiet worship to violent battles.

**Finance Department**
**Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru**

No. FD 25 JS (B&R)2025 Date:23.11.2025

**PRESS COMMUNIQUE**

It is notified for general information that the outstanding balance of **8.27% Karnataka SDL 2025** issued in terms of the Government of Karnataka, Finance Department Notification **No. FD 01 BMB 2015(P) dated December 18, 2015** will be repaid at par on **December 23, 2025** with interest due up to and including **December 22, 2025.** In the event of a holiday being declared on the aforesaid date by any State Government under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, the loan will be repaid by the paying offices in that State on the previous working day. **No interest will accrue on the loan from and after December 23, 2025.**

2. As per sub-regulation 24 (2) and 24 (3) of Government Securities Regulations, 2007 payment of maturity proceeds to the registered holder of Government Security held in the form of Subsidiary General Ledger or Constituent Subsidiary General Ledger account or Stock Certificate shall be made by a pay order incorporating the relevant particulars of his bank account or by credit to the account of the holder in any bank having facility of receipt of funds through electronic means. For the purpose of making payment in respect of the securities, the original subscriber or the subsequent holders of such a Government Securities, as the case may be, shall submit to the Bank or Treasury and Sub-Treasury or branch of State Bank of India, where they are enfaced / registered for payment of interest, as the case may be, the relevant particulars of their bank account.

3. However, in the absence of relevant particulars of bank account / mandate for receipt of funds through electronic means, to facilitate repayment on the due date, holders of **8.27% Karnataka SDL 2025** should tender their securities at the Public Debt Office, 20 days in advance. The securities should be tendered for repayment, duly discharged on the reverse there of as under:

**"Received the Principal due on the Certificate".**

4. It should be particularly noted that at places where the treasury work is done by a branch of the State Bank of India, the securities, if they are in the form of Stock Certificates, should be tendered at the branch of the bank concerned and not at the Treasury or Sub-Treasury.

5. Holders who wish to receive payment at places other than those where the securities have been enfaced for payment should send them duly discharged to the Public Debt Office concerned by Registered and Insured Post. The Public Debt Office will make payment by issuing a draft payable at any Treasury/Sub-Treasury or branch of State Bank of India conducting Government Treasury work in the State of **Karnataka.**

**Sd/-**
**Dr. P.C. Jaffer**
**Secretary to Government**
**(Budget & Resources)**
**Finance Department**

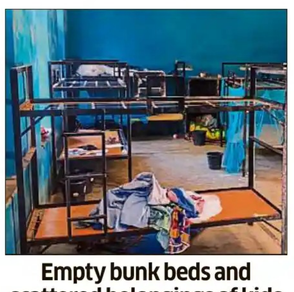
DIPR/DD-C.P/3938/KSMCA/2025-26

# 303 students, 12 teachers abducted in Nigeria

ABUJA (NIGERIA), AP/PTI

A total of 303 schoolchildren and 12 teachers were abducted by gunmen during an attack on St Mary's School, a Catholic institution in north-central Nigeria's Niger state, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) said on Saturday, updating an earlier tally of 215 schoolchildren.

The revised number was issued "after a verification exercise and a final census was carried out," according to a statement by Rev Bulus Dauwa Yohanna, chairman of the Niger state chapter of CAN. He added that 88 other students "were also captured after they tried to escape" during the attack. The students, both male and female, ranged in age from 10 to 18.



Empty bunk beds and scattered belongings of kids inside St Mary's School in Papiri on Friday. AFP

The kidnapping in Niger state's remote Papiri community occurred four days after 25 schoolchildren were seized in similar circumstances in Kebbi state's Maga town, some 170 km away.

No group has claimed responsibility for the latest abductions. Authorities said tactical squads have been deployed alongside local hunters to rescue the children.

School kidnappings have become a grim feature of insecurity, with armed gangs often viewing schools as "strategic" targets to draw national and international attention.

# Bolsonaro held over plot to escape

**SAO PAULO, AP/PTI:** Brazil's Supreme Court ordered the preemptive arrest of former President Jair Bolsonaro on Saturday, with a judge claiming he was intent on escaping just days before he was set to begin his 27-year prison sentence for leading a coup attempt.

The 70-year-old politician was taken to the headquarters of the country's federal police in Brasilia, from his house arrest. Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes said that Bolsonaro's ankle monitor, which he has worn since July 18 for being deemed a flight risk, was violated on Saturday morning.

# Bangladesh hit by three more tremors, toll over 10

**DHAKA, PTI:** Three subsequent jolts after a relatively major earthquake, which claimed at least 10 lives within a span of 32 hours, have panicked Bangladesh amid expert warnings of an impending major quake, with the four tremors described as foreshocks.

A 5.7-magnitude earthquake struck on Friday morning, causing at least 10 deaths and significant damage to buildings, mostly in central parts of the country including the capital Dhaka. Another tremor was felt at around the same time on Saturday morning.

## SU DO KU X - 3744

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| 9 | | | | | | | 1 | |
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| | | | 7 | 9 | 1 | | | |
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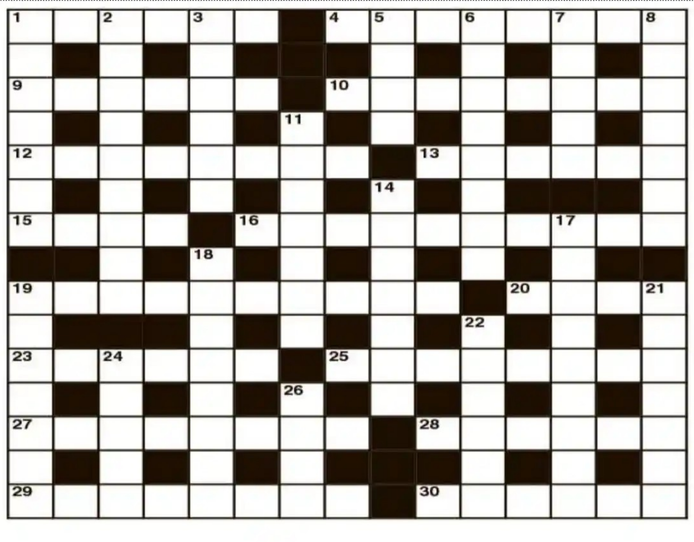
| | 3 | | 4 | | | | | 2 |
| | | 1 | 2 | 8 | 5 | | 9 | 4 |
| | | | | 4 | | | 7 | |
| 2 | 1 | 6 | 5 | | | | 3 | |
| | | | | | | 6 | | |

**SOLUTION TO 3743**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 5 |
| 9 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 1 | 7 |
| 5 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 3 |
| 7 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 6 |
| 1 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 4 |
| 4 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 2 |
| 6 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 8 |
| 2 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 9 |

**To solve the puzzle:**
The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

## ◆ SUNDAY CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 2655 ◆



**ACROSS**
1 Very best (6)
4 Country formerly Siam (8)
9 Discuss terms for armistice (6)
10 Rather superior to (3,5)
12 As a rule (8)
13 Close by (2,4)
15 Narrow country road (4)
16 Access to perks and easy money (5,5)
19 Classic John Ford western (10)
20 Type of flexible armour (4)
23 Ludicrous (6)
25 Disciple (8)
27 Dismiss scornfully (4-4)
28 Procedure regularly followed (6)
29 Resemblance (8)
30 Repressed (4-2)

**DOWN**
1 Characteristic (7)
2 Obsessive desire to start fires (9)
3 Medium-sized American wildcat (6)
5 Trawler's catch of fish (4)
6 Greatly agitated (2,1,5)
7 Pleasing smell (5)
8 German city associated with china (7)
11 French pioneer aviator (7)
14 Alligator pear (7)
17 Consequently (2,1,6)
18 Small freshwater turtle (8)
19 Surgeon's knife (7)
21 Utter inadvertently (3,4)
22 Italian city built on islands (6)
24 Undercover agent (5)
26 Gumption (4)

**SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 4015**

**CRYPTIC**
**ACROSS:** 9, Co-me co-me 10, To(we)R 11, Or-i-gan 12, L-earns 13, Again-st 14, Slip 15, Double talk 17, Holds out 18, Battery 19, A-L's-o 21, Im-Po-se 24, Sneaking suspicion 27, F-iance 29, Wood (would) 30, S-tra-tum 33, C-herries 35, Time-pieces 36, Grip 37, Meaning 38, W-rests 40, Strain 41, Eye (I) 42, Lur-ch-ing.
**DOWN:** 1, Come to pass 2, Tear 3, F-orswe-ar 4, Get-away 5, French toast 6, T-or-tell-I-ni 7, Miss-US 8, Fat-I-gues 10, Track 16, Bit-tern 20, L-ass-o 22, Private 23, In two s-hakes 25, Keep in mind 26, Na-us-eating 28, In-her-it-s 31, Tape-worm 32, S-mug-gle 34, Re-peat 35, T-rice 39, Echo.

**EASY**
**ACROSS:** 9, Coleslaw 10, Can 11, Orally 12, Citric 13, Leering 14, Lost 15, Boisterous 17, Identify 18, Stooped 19, Aria 21, Arable 24, Light middleweight 27, Random 29, Heed 30, Screams 33, Accustom 35, Plantation 36, Grip 37, Tantrum 38, Pantry 40, Stereo 41, Eel 42, Chlorine.
**DOWN:** 1, Horizontal 2, Fear 3, Black eye 4, Swallow 5, Anticipated 6, Congregate 7, Ballot 8, Blissful 10, Chess 16, Sponged 20, Ridge 22, Augment 23, Right-minded 25, Temptation 26, Tambourine 28, Accurate 31, Catapult 32, Hammock 34, Umpire 35, Peril 39, Norm.

**TURBULENT TIMES** Administrative apathy and Serie A slipping down in quality have contributed to Italian football's slide

# FREE FALL of Azzurri

SIDNEY KIRAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

When Italy won the Euro 2020—held in 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic—it seemed like the dawn of a new era. After lifting the coveted FIFA World Cup for a fourth time in 2006 in Germany, the Azzurri had crashed out in the group stage of the showpiece event in 2010 and 2014 respectively before hitting a new low when they failed to qualify for the 2018 edition in Russia.

One of the heavyweights of world football who turned disciplined defending into an art form called Catenaccio, much like the revered attacking styles such as Total Football or Joga Bonito, were slowly losing their elite status. The penalty shoot-out win against England at Wembley following a rip-roaring campaign where they won admirers for their high-octane football—something that took everyone by surprise as Italians and high-pressing game were largely considered mutually exclusive—was supposed to be the beginning of a fresh era under Roberto Mancini.

Italy, under Mancini, the one who masterminded the stunning ascension of Manchester City in landing them their first Premier League title in 44 years in the 2011-12 season, showed they were willing to shed their image of old and embrace modernity, and move forward like fellow European powerhouses France, Germany, Spain and England. Cut to the present and 2021 appears nothing less than a mirage with Italy yet again stuck in the sand and struggling to keep the wheels in motion.

Like a year later, after the Euro triumph when they failed to qualify for the World Cup for a second straight time, Italy stand on the precipice of another disaster as they missed out on a direct berth to the bash in the Americas next year. Italy, like in 2018 and 2022, will have to win two playoffs scheduled next March to confirm their spot.

The Euro 2020 triumph was supposed to bring a new dawn in Italian football but it has appeared nothing more than a mirage with the Azzurri in danger of not qualifying for a third successive FIFA World Cup. AFP

First up for the Azzurri are Northern Ireland, a clash they are expected to boss considering their rivals have beaten them just once in 11 head-to-head meetings with the last one coming way back in 1958. It's the next match which is a potential banana skin. Mostly likely Italy will face tenacious Wales, provided the latter don't suffer an upset against minnows Bosnia-Herzegovina. A little less than five months is left for current coach Gennaro Gattuso to bury the ghosts of the past but the harsh reality is many are worried it could be another nightmare that could spell the death knell for Italian football.

So how did such a mighty nation, whose four World Cups are second only to Brazil's record five and joint second with Germany, plunge to mediocrity? Well, it's a whole bunch of them. From Serie A, once famed for attracting the best of footballers including the great Diego Maradona at the peak of his powers, losing relevance to rival leagues such as EPL, La Liga and Bundesliga to apathetic administration to aging infrastructure that have not received an upgrade for decades to coaches lacking tactical nous to financial stagnation... have all formed a vicious cocktail that's left Italian football on life-support system.

It's a no-brainer that domestic leagues are the lifeblood of talent production. The higher the quality of league, better the talent on display. Sadly, because of several financial scandals and lack of leadership at club levels, Serie A has dropped the pecking order in Europe, and its no longer as competitive as it used to be, like in the 1990s and 2000s, or even the first decade of this century. Domestic players, both young and experienced, once used to rubbing shoulders with the best in the world, now get to taste that only during Champions League with hardly any superstar player engaged in Serie A. Most ply their trade in EPL, La Liga, Bundesliga and even Ligue 1, reducing Serie A to an afterthought.

Once the quality of the league goes down, it starts to have a cascading effect on the supply chain, which has taken a hit in Italy. A country that always boasted of having a bunch of inspirational players in every squad is today struggling to field even one genuine leader. This is in complete contrast to Spain, England, Germany or Portugal who are loaded with stars in the playing XI with regular starters for clubs sometimes warming the benches. Apart from having leaders in the dressing room, Italy is also lacking a genuine world-class striker. France have Kylian Mbappe, England have Harry Kane, Spain are gifted with two young attacking wingers-cum-goalscorers in Lamine Yamal and Nico Williams, Germany possesses Leroy Sane and Jamal Musiala and Norway is blessed with the insatiable Erling Haaland. Truth be told, as other European big dogs battle surplus, Italians are fighting with a shortage.

Another important facet is Italy's lack of evolution. Football, which was rhythmic once upon a time, is generally fast and furious now. Teams love to press high and fast, there's greater emphasis on quick interchanges of balls, speed along the flanks is an absolute must and players are expected to cover more areas on the pitch. All this requires the proper fusion of coaching, nutrition and sport science. And it all starts at age-group then at the club-level so that when players migrate to the national, they are ready-made. That's not the case with Italian football as many coaches at the top as well as the second level are still old-school, owning to multiple factors. This inhibits national coaches from employing modern tactics, and Italians have been found wanting on multiple occasions, like in the two qualifying losses to Norway.

Administrators also have to cop a lot of flak for failing to show intent in bringing about a change. Rights for Premier League and La Liga have sold for billions of dollars but Serie A is not able to command the same. So clubs are left with lot less in the bank which means they have no choice but to let go of top talents. Plus, many of the iconic stadiums in Italy have aged badly with barely any attempts at renovation because of the huge amount of bureaucracy involved. Compare this with England or Spain which have multiple start-of-the-art venues that gives youth the best of facilities right from the moment they are cutting their teeth.

Four months is an extremely short time to bring about wholesome changes. Italy can still qualify for the World Cup if they can ace those two qualifiers.

But if they want their seat back amongst the elite, plenty of rebuilding has to be done, starting now.

## Magileto wins BTC Trophy

**BENGALURU RESULTS**

Magileto, from the stables of Aman Altaf Hussain and ridden by Trevor Patel, won the Bangalore Turf Club Trophy, the feature event of the winter races on Saturday.

**1. Beginners Plate - 1100M:** Quantum (Michel Eshwer) G Vivek 1; Monumental (Trevor Patel) 2; Global Dominance (Suraj Narredu) 3; Portieux (Antony Raj) 4; WB: 9, 1-3/4, 1/2L; T: 1:06.64; Tote: Rs 22w; Rs 11, 28p; Fc: Rs 174; Q: Rs 113; Shp: Rs 53; Thp: Rs 47; Tri: Rs 157 & 43; Exp: Rs 666 & 367; TB: M Eshwer; Fav: Global Dominance.

**2. Shivanasamudra Falls (Div II) Plate - 1300M:** Exceed (Marthand Singh Mahindra) J Chinoy 1; Knotty Cruise (G Vivek) 2; Amalure (Sai Kiran) 2, Sustaining Grace (Vinod Shinde). NR: Husanara, Big Sauce & N R I Millennium; WB: Hd, 7, 3-3/4L; T: 1:19.32; Tote: Rs 24w; Rs 10, 13, 10p; Fc: Rs 114; Q: Rs 43; Shp: Rs 28; Thp: Rs 40; Tri: Rs 77 & 37; Exp: Rs 352 & 338; TB: Suleiman Attaollahi; Fav: Amalure.

**3. Phar Lap Plate - 1100M:** Imperador (Arun Alagappan) Suraj Narredu 1; Aphelion (Sai Kiran) 2; Zayana (Pavan) 3; Fiery Love (Mukesh Kumar) 4; WB: 1, 1-3/4, 5-1/4L; T: 1:07.82; Tote: Rs 12w; Rs 10, 13, 15p; Fc: Rs 38; Q: Rs 38; Shp: 31; Thp: Rs 26; Tri: Rs 139 & 77; Exp: Rs 345 & 98; TB: Prasanna Kumar; Fav: Imperador.

**4. YS Surender Memorial Trophy - 1600M:** Refreshement (Kaliyaperumal) Mukesh Kumar 1; Alfonsine (Suraj Narredu) 2; Sicyon (Trevor Patel) 3; Alamgir (Arvind Kumar) 4; WB: Lnk, 3/4, 3/4L; T: 1:36.69; Tote: Rs 73w; Rs 19, 14, 11p; Fc: Rs 206; Q: 108; Shp: Rs 35; Thp: Rs 41; Tri: Rs 240 & 135; Exp: Rs 1,771 & 1,470; TB: Prasanna Kumar; Fav: Alfonsine.

**5. Bangalore Turf Club Trophy - 1200M:** Magileto (Soloman Sopher) Trevor Patel 1; Seige Courageous (Suraj Narredu) 2; Knotty Charmer (Imran Chisty) 3; Aldgate (Antony Raj) 4.; WB: 2-3/4, 4-1/4L, Snk; T: 1:10.93; Tote: Rs 21w; Rs 10, 10, 11p; Fc 37; Q: 18; Shp: Rs 27; Thp: Rs 30; Tri: Rs 62 & 52; Exp: Rs 291 & 202; TB: Aman Altaf Hussain; Fav: Siege Courageous.

**6. Smarty Jones Plate - 1200M:** Reiko (P Arun Kumar) Suraj Narredu 1; Del Aviz (Antony Raj) 2; Regal Reality (Trevor Patel) 3; Invincible (Angad) 4; WB: 2-3/4, Lnk, 3-3/4L; T: 1.11.72; Tote: Rs 17w; Rs 10, 15, 10p; Fc: Rs 70; Q: Rs 50; Shp: Rs 33; Thp: Rs 51; Tri: Rs 77 & 22; Exp: Rs 849 & 990; TB: Pradeep Annaiah; Fav: Reiko.

**7. Shivanasamudra Falls Plate (Div I) - 1300M:** Sassy Sarah (K Manoj Kumar) N Darshan 1; Contessina (Suraj Narredu) 2; Stalingrad (Pavan) 3; Blind Faith (Siddaraju) 4; WB: 3, 1/2, 3/4L; T: 1:20.41; Tote: Rs 39w; Rs 14, 15, 10p; Fc: Rs 134; Q: Rs 66; Shp: Rs 27; Thp: Rs 44: Tri: Rs 154 & 78; Exp: Rs 812 & 472; TB: Prasanna Kumar; Fav: Stalingrad. **Jackpot:** Rs 1,429 (316). **Runner-up:** Rs 101 (1919). **I treble:** Rs 270 (276). **II treble:** Rs 197 (516).

## Double delight for Aradhya

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Karnataka's rising tennis talent Aradhya Kshitij delivered a brilliant performance to secure both the singles and doubles titles at the ITF J6, at the All Assam Tennis Association Complex in Chachal, Guwahati.

In the singles final, he beat second seed Praneel Sharma 6-2, 7-6.

**FOOTBALL PREMIER LEAGUE**

# Liverpool's season hits new low

**Chelsea boost title charge with 2-0 victory; Fulham beat Sunderland 1-0**

LONDON, AFP

Liverpool's woeful season suffered another loss with a shocking 3-0 home defeat against Nottingham Forest, while Chelsea won 2-0 at Burnley to step up their Premier League title challenge on Saturday.

The spluttering champions fell behind in the 33rd minute when Murillo's fierce strike punished their failure to deal with Elliot Anderson's corner.

Reds boss Arne Slot was fuming that the goal was allowed despite Forest's Dan Ndoye appearing to obstruct Liverpool keeper Alisson Becker -- an offence that led Virgil van Dijk's equaliser to be disallowed in the 3-0 loss at Manchester City before the international break.

Sean Dyche's side doubled their lead after 46 minutes when Nicolo Savona slotted home from Neco Williams' cut-back.

With Liverpool's defence in disarray, Morgan Gibbs-White scored Forest's third from the rebound after Omari Hutchinson's shot was saved in the 78th minute.

Murillo (left) celebrates after scoring Nottingham Forest's first goal against Liverpool at Anfield. AFP

Beaten by Forest at Anfield for a second successive season, Liverpool have lost eight of their last 11 games in all competitions, including six of their last seven in the top-flight.

It is the first time Liverpool have lost consecutive league games by a three-goal margin since 1965.

Slot admitted on Friday that Liverpool's players are still affected by the tragic death of Diogo Jota in a crash crash in Spain in July.

And once again they were devoid of inspiration and energy in another lethargic display that left them languishing in 11th place, eight points behind leaders Arsenal.

Liverpool's stunning decline comes after a summer spending spree of over £400 million ($523 million).

Alexander Isak was hauled off in the second half of his fourth league start for Liverpool following a record move from Newcastle United that has failed to live up to the hype.

### Massive week ahead

It was the ideal warm-up for Chelsea ahead of a crucial week featuring home games against Barcelona in the Champions League on Tuesday and Arsenal in the Premier League on November 30.

The west Londoners would drop back down to third place if Manchester City avoid defeat against Newcastle later on Saturday, but regardless of that result, their hard-fought victory in freezing Lancashire added to their title momentum.

"It's tough after the international break, 12:30, Burnley away, it's always a hard game. But the way we competed I'm very happy," Maresca said.

"It was very important to keep the momentum from before the international break."

West Ham blew a two-goal lead in their 2-2 draw at Bournemouth. Raul Jimenez's 84th minute goal gave Fulham a 1-0 victory against Sunderland at Craven Cottage.

**Results:** Liverpool: 0 lt to Nottingham Forest: 3 (Murillo 33th, Savona 46th, Gibbs-White 78th); Brighton: 2 (Welbeck 71st, Hinshelwood 84th) bt Brentford: 1 (Thiago 29th); Bournemouth: 2 (Tavernier 69th pen, Unal 81st) drew with West Ham: 2 (Wilson 12th, 35th); Fulham: 1 (Jimenez 84th) bt Sunderland: 0; Wolves: 0 lt to Crystal Palace: 2 (Munoz 63rd, Pino 69th); Burnley: 0 lt to Chelsea: 2 (Neto 37th, Fernandez 88th).

# Lakshya to face Tanaka in final

SYDNEY, PTI

Star Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen stormed into the men's singles final of the Australian Open Super 500 with a gritty three-game win over world No. 6 Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei, here on Saturday.

Lakshya showed immense mental toughness to recover from an opening-game setback and outlast the second seed 17-21, 24-22, 21-16 in an 86-minute semis.

The 24-year-old, who reached the Hong Kong Open final earlier this year but is yet to win a title this season, will face either Japan's Yushi Tanaka who defeated Chinese Taipei's fifth seed Lin Chun-Yi 21-18, 21-15.

Lakshya looked patchy early on while Chen was far more precise with his shot selection and execution, which allowed the Taiwanese to dominate the rallies. His steady play earned him a 11-6 lead at mid-game interval.

Chen's aggressive backcourt attack paid off as he raced to 14-7. Lakshya briefly halted the run with a big smash to the deep corner, but Chen immediately won back the serve with a sharp cross-court winner.

The Indian kept feeding shuttles into Chen's hitting zone, and the Taiwanese repeatedly unleashed his power smashes. A net error from Lakshya made it 19-13 before Chen, who had committed a few soft mistakes, steadied himself again. At 19-15, the two played a 44-shot rally that ended with Chen delivering a killing blow to earn five game points. Lakshya saved two, but then drove one into the net to concede the opener.

Lakshya Sen scored a 17-21, 24-22, 21-16 win over Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei in the Australian Open semis on Saturday. AFP FILE PHOTO

After the change of ends, both players took time to adjust, trading errors as the score moved from 2-2 to 4-4. Chen's pinpoint attacks began clicking again as he pulled ahead 7-4. But Lakshya fought back superbly, levelling at 9-9 with Chen's defence beginning to fray.

Chen eventually saved four but eventually netted the shuttle, as Lakshya sealed an impressive comeback.

## Cobolli's heroics power Italy into Davis Cup final

**BOLOGNA, AFP:** Double defending champions Italy beat Belgium 2-0 on Friday in Bologna after Flavio Cobolli won a 32-point tiebreak to set up a Davis Cup final with either Spain or Germany.

Former Wimbledon finalist Matteo Berrettini overcame Raphael Collignon 6-3, 6-4 to give Italy the lead. Then team leader Cobolli beat Zizou Bergs 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 7-6 (17/15).

"It's really tough to say something about this match," Cobolli said. "I played for all of my team, my family, and it's one of the best days of my life."

The match took just over three hours in a noisy stadium in Bologna where the 23-year-old Cobolli only broke serve once, in the first set.

Neither player conceded a break point in the second set, which Bergs clinched in a tie-break. Growing increasingly aggressive, the Belgian earned three break points early in the third set and a fourth at 4-4.

But Cobolli responded each time with a supersonic first serves to clear the danger, then earned two match points in the following game.

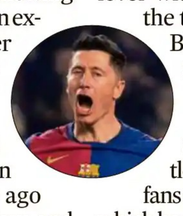
The Belgian right-hander saved himself with two aces but then failed to convert his fifth break point at 5-5, forcing another tiebreak.

In the nail-biting 32-point tiebreak Cobolli saved seven match points before winning.

# Barca return to Camp Nou in style

BARCELONA, AFP

Barcelona made a triumphant return to their rebuilt Camp Nou stadium on Saturday following two-and-a-half years in exile with a 4-0 win over Athletic Bilbao to go joint top of La Liga.



The Spanish champions had planned to reopen their stadium a year ago but construction delays and other setbacks meant they were forced to wait for their homecoming.

Ferran Torres netted a brace after Robert Lewandowski **(in pic)** opened the scoring. Fermin Lopez also struck in a comfortable win against Athletic, who had Oihan Sancet sent off in the second half.

Hansi Flick's side pulled level with Real Madrid at the top of the table. Los Blancos visit Elche on Sunday.

Barca set off fireworks before and after the game as a little more than 45,000 fans filled the three stands which had been opened.

Flick was able to name Joan Garcia after the goalkeeper had missed the previous nine games injured.

**Result:** Barcelona: 4 (Lewandowski 4th, Ferran 45th+3, 90th, Lopez 40th) bt Athletic Club: 0.

# Stalemates continue in World Cup semifinals

MANISHA MOHITE

The stakes have risen substantially and the 'safety first' approach was all the more noticeable in the second game of the semifinal of the FIDE World Cup which is at the concluding and most intense stage at Resort Rio in Goa.

Uzbek compatriots Javokhir Sindarov and Nodirbek Yakkubboev were the first to finish their game with a speedy draw while Alexey Esipenko toiled to extract some advantage with the White pieces before settling for a draw against Wei Yi of China.

Both the semifinal games had ended in deadlock on Friday as well and the tiebreak under faster time controls on Sunday will decide the two finalists and also the players who will qualify for the elite eight player Candidates.

GM Javokhir Sindarov (above) of Uzbekistan drew against his counterpart Nodirbek Yakkubboev in the second game of the FIDE World Cup semifinals at Resort Rio in Goa. FIDE

The two semifinal losers will also fight it off in a playoff to decide the third place as the player finishing third also seals a spot to the Candidates.

The tie-breaks on Sunday promise to be exciting and thrilling as players cannot seek the safety of draws as there are sets of two tie-breaks in rapid, followed by blitz and finally the Armageddon with two players advancing to the finals.

Wei Yi opted for the Petroff defence, the one which enjoys the reputation of being a 'drawing' defence at the highest level of the game. Incidentally this was also the defence which had knocked out Arjun Erigaisi in the quarterfinals.

It was a slow paced game where the players castled on the Queen-side. Esipenko did make some attempt at attack but never went full out.

At this point, Esipenko proposed to split the point but Wei decided to continue, trying to figure out an attack with his queen.

**Semifinal Game 2 results:** GM Javokhir Sindarov drew with GM Nodirbek Yakubboev 1-1; GM Andrey Esipenko drew with GM Wei Yi 1-1.

## Misty for feature event

**KOLKATA SELECTIONS**

Aashay Doctor-trained Misty is fancied to win the Royal Western India Turf Club Ltd Cup, the feature event of the Kolkata races run over a distance of seven furlongs at the races on Sunday. The first race starts at 1 pm.

**1. Bergamo Handicap - 1400M:** Hermes 1, Lineupandcollect 2, Made In Heaven 3.
**2. Vibrant Queen Handicap (Div I) - 1200M:** Black Diamond 1, Princess Peach 2, Infinia 3.
**3. Vibrant Handicap (Div II) - 1200M:** Most And More 1, Zalia 2, N R I Fantasy 3.
**4. Dancing Colours Plate - 2000M:** Sanaya 1, Laamika 2, Multi Success 3.
**5. Own Opinion Handicap - 1400M:** Charismatic 1, Snowpiercer 2, Bharat 3.
**6. Royal Western India Turf Club Ltd Cup - 1400M:** Misty 1, Kings Retreat 2, Supreme Grandeur 3.
**7. Eagle Pines Handicap - 1400M:** Pantazi 1, Dance Along 2, Abhicandra 3.
**Day's best:** Pantazi.
**Jackpot:** 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7. **I treble:** 2, 3 & 4. **II treble:** 5, 6 & 7.

## IN BRIEF

### Ritesh brace powers Hoysala

▸ Ritesh scored a brace as Hoysala Hockey Club defeated Friends Hockey Club, Kalaburgi in 3-1 in the KSHA C Division Hockey League Championship on Saturday, reports DHNS.

**Results:** Hoysala Hockey Club: 3 (Ritesh 10th, 16th, Surya 44th) bt Friends Hockey Club, Kalaburgi: 1 (Sharan 48th); Gameon Hockey Club: 2 (Karthik Mahalingam 27th, Avinash 44th) bt Dynamites United Hockey Club: 0.

### Raashi bags U-19 TT title

▸ Raashi V Rao won the girls' U-19 title at the Karnataka State Ranking Table Tennis tournament by defeating Shivani Mahendran in a gruelling final 11-5,8-11,11-9,16-14,11-13,11-8 (4-2) in Dharwad on Saturday, reports DHNS.

**Results: Boys: U-17:** Gaurav Gowda bt Arya Jain 14-12,11-4,7-11,8-11,11-8. **Girls: U-17:** Hiya Singh bt Irene Anna Subhash 11-7,8-11,11-4,11-7. **U-19:** Raashi Rao bt Shivani Mahendran 11-5,8-11,11-9,16-14,11-13,11-8.

### Sandhu wins 4th medal

▸ Continuing with her splendid debut run, India's Mahit Sandhu clinched the women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions gold for her fourth medal at the Summer Deaflympics in Tokyo, reports PTI from New Delhi.

### Indian women into final

▸ India delivered a powerhouse performance at the iconic P Sara Oval, storming into the finals of the 1st Women's T20 World Cup cricket for the blind with a dominant 9-wicket win over Australia, reports DHNS.

The innings was anchored by Player of the Match Basanti Hansda, whose composure and class defined India's chase.

**Brief scores:** Australia: 109/9 in 20 overs (Chanakan Buakhao 34, Julie Neumann 25) lt to India: Basanti Hansda 45, Ganga Kadam 41). **Results:** India won by 9 wickets. **PoM:** Basanti Hansda.

### NZ complete dominant ODI sweep

**HAMILTON (NEW ZEALAND), AFP:** Matt Henry took 4-43 and Mark Chapman crafted 64 as New Zealand coasted to a four-wicket win over the West Indies in the third one-day international on Saturday for a series sweep.

The tourists' top order failed to fire once again, skittled for 161 in Hamilton before New Zealand eased to 162-6 off 30.2 overs. The chase started poorly, with the home side reduced to 32-3, before Chapman's steady knock was supplemented by an unbeaten 40 from Michael Bracewell.

The most one-sided match of the series left New Zealand savouring a 3-0 triumph, following their 3-1 win in the T20 series. The teams will next contest three Tests, starting in Christchurch on December 2.

**Brief scores:** West Indies: 161 all out in 36.2 overs (John Campbell 26, Roston Chase 38; Matt Henry 4-43, Jacob Duffy 2-27, Mitchell Santner 2-27) lt to New Zealand: 162/6 in 30.3 overs Mark Chapman 64, Michael Bracewell 40; Matthew Forde 2-46, Jayden Seales 2-35). **Results:** NZ won by four wickets. **Series:** NZ win three-match series 3-0. **PoM:** Matt Henry. **PoS:** Kyle Jamieson.

## ◆ ON TV ◆

**CRICKET**

**2nd Test:** India vs South Africa (**day 2, 9 am**). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network.**

**FOOTBALL**

**EPL:** Leeds United vs Aston Villa (**7:30 pm**), Arsenal vs Tottenham (**10 pm**). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network.**

**La Liga:** Real Oviedo vs Rayo Vallecano (**6:30 pm**), Real Betis vs Girona FC (**8:45 pm**). **LIVE** on **FanCode.**

**BADMINTON**

**Australian Open:** Finals (**7:30 am**). **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

**HOCKEY**

**Sultan Azlan Shah Cup:** India vs Korea (**1:30 pm**). **LIVE** on **FanCode.**

**MOTORSPORT**

**Formula 1:** Las Vegas GP (**main race: 9:30 am**). **LIVE** on **FanCode.**

**CRICKET INDIA-SA TEST SERIES**

# India nudge ahead ON ATTRITIONAL DAY

### Kuldeep bags three as hosts reduce South Africa to 247/6

**MADHU JAWALI**
GUWAHATI, DHNS

The significance of a well prepared pitch for a high quality Test match cannot be overstated. When a surface overwhelmingly favours either batting or bowling, the contest loses its balance and the spectacle turns into a farce. That is exactly what transpired in Kolkata a few days ago between India and South Africa, followed by a similar situation in Perth over the last two days between Australia and England. Together, those two Tests failed to last even five full days of play.

In sharp contrast, Guwahati, the venue for the second Test, produced a refreshing change with a pitch that allowed every practitioner to make an impact. There were runs available for batters who showed determination and application. Fast bowlers, who remained disciplined and patient, could earn rewards. Spinners were equally in the game if they were willing to exploit the noticeable turn and bounce from the first morning. All three sets of players played their part to produce an attritional yet engrossing opening day of Test cricket on Saturday.

After South Africa decided to bat first -- India's poor luck with the coin continued as Pant became the latest captain to lose the toss -- and enjoyed the better of exchanges in the first two sessions (82/1 and 74/1) through steady, percentage cricket rather than aggressive domination, India stormed back into the contest with four wickets in the final session to finish the day with their noses slightly in front.

India were eyeing ascendency after extracting three wickets and reducing South Africa to 201/5 in the day's final phase of play, but a stand of 45 runs between Tony de Zorzi (28) and Senuran Muthusamy (25 n.o.) appeared to tilt the balance in favour of the tourists. Mohammed Siraj, however, wrested back the initiative with the new ball. Having bowled without much luck, the pacer persuaded de Zorzi to nick a teaser to Pant and leave the Proteas at not-so-comfortable 247/6 at stumps.

It was also a test of character for the South African batters who couldn't stay focused when stifled for runs. Ryan Rickelton (35 off 82), skipper Temba Bavuma (41 off 92 balls) and Tristan Stubbs (49 off 112) all got starts but got out to avoidable shots, undoing all the hard work. Indian bowlers, especially Jasprit Bumrah (1/38) and Kuldeep Yadav (3/48), stood out for their resourcefulness.

South Africa made one change to their line-up with left-arm spinner Muthusamy coming in for pacer Corbin Bosch while India made two changes, bringing in Sai Sudharsan and Nitish Reddy in place of Shubman Gill and Axar Patel. On a pitch with true bounce, Bumrah and Siraj bowled probing lines at the start and asked plenty of questions of the openers. During the initial hour, Aiden Markram and Rickelton found scoring difficult against probing pace while India created their first real opportunity in the seventh over when Bumrah drew a thick edge from Markram with a fuller ball that moved away. However, KL Rahul dropped a straightforward catch after Markram had taken 17 balls to get off the mark with a boundary.

Despite a few anxious moments, both the openers gradually settled and runs began to come more freely. There was noticeable swing and encouraging seam movement, which suggested early relevance for spin as well. Spinners found turn and bounce, yet the breakthrough continued to evade India. Just when South Africa looked likely to reach tea without losing a wicket, Bumrah struck. Returning for the final over before the interval, he produced a delivery that cut through Markram's defence, the rattled stumps providing both joy and relief for the Indian camp.

India gained another wicket immediately after tea, this time through Kuldeep who sent back Rickelton. After almost an entire first session without success, India suddenly had both openers dismissed in the space of three deliveries spread across the two intervals.

And it was that kind of day where fortunes kept swinging before settling on India's side. For the moment that is.

**SCOREBOARD**

**SOUTH AFRICA (I INNINGS):**

| | |
|---|---|
| Markram b Bumrah (81b, 5x4) | 38 |
| Rickelton c Pant b Kuldeep (82b, 5x4) | 35 |
| Stubbs c Rahul b Kuldeep (112b, 4x4, 2x6) | 49 |
| Bavuma c Jaiswal b Jadeja (92b, 5x4) | 41 |
| De Zorzi c Pant b Siraj (59b, 3x4, 1x6) | 28 |
| Mulder c Jaiswal b Kuldeep (18b, 2x4) | 13 |
| Muthusamy (batting) (45b, 4x4) | 25 |
| Verreynne (batting) (4b) | 1 |
| Extras (B-8, LB-7, NB-2) | 17 |
| **Total (for 6 wkts, 81.5 overs)** | **....247** |

**Fall of wickets:** 1-82 (Markram), 2-82 (Rickelton), 3-166 (Bavuma), 4-187 (Stubbs), 5-201 (Mulder), 6-246 (de Zorzi).

**Bowling:** Bumrah 17-6-38-1 (nb-1), Siraj 17.5-3-59-1, Nitish 4-0-21-0, Washington 14-3-36-0, Kuldeep 17-3-48-3, Jadeja 12-1-30-1 (nb-1).

India's Kuldeep Yadav (right) celebrates with team-mate Ravindra Jadeja after dismissing South Africa's Wiaan Mulder on the opening day of the second Test in Guwahati on Saturday. PTI

## How Indian bowlers preyed on SA batters' patience

**MADHU JAWALI**
GUWAHATI, DHNS

On a pitch that facilitated an engaging game of Test cricket, Indian bowlers stood out with their class and craft. The opening day's play of the second Test between India and South Africa was a welcome departure from the one that unfolded in Kolkata and put to test not just the skills of the players but their temperament as well.

As many as five South African batters, after their skipper Temba Bavuma opted to bat first, showed runs were available for those willing to apply themselves. The visitors, however, could have been in a far better situation had they maintained discipline for longer periods. It wasn't a surface where you could score freely but it wasn't something where each ball had your name on it. Batting time and tiring the bowlers should have been their strategy, especially after getting good starts.

That said, India's bowlers deserve every bit of credit. The field placements were somewhat defensive early on, yet the bowlers remained committed to their plans. The pacers operated with patience and relentless accuracy, attacking the stumps and limiting scoring options. The spinners extracted appreciable turn and bounce even on day one, constantly keeping the batters guessing.

Their strategy of drying up runs paid off beautifully as three set batters threw away their wickets in attempts to break the shackles.

"You can bat time, but you look up and the scoreboard's sort of gone nowhere," said South African batter Tristan Stubbbs. "I do think they (India) bowled quite well, the seamers especially. (They) just kept bowling straight lines, attacking the stumps, and they sort of bowled to contain, so I think they bowl nicely. But all of us had opportunities, and if you look in it, no one kicked on (after getting starts), so we can take that (blame) on ourselves."

This once again underlines the point that India should reconsider their fascination for rank-turners and instead play on decks that suit their strengths.

"It's a really tough one," said Indian team's assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate when asked if India should explore options of playing on surfaces that aren't under-prepared. "My personal point of view is that the wicket very rarely determines who wins the game. If we'd played better in Kolkata, I feel we could have won the Test on that surface. So the first thing isn't to look at the wicket, it's to look at the quality of cricket that both teams are playing. But having said that, you've got to introspect and look at recent results."

India lost two Tests against New Zealand last year and one against South Africa last week on pitches which heavily aided spinners.

"I think these sort of wickets maybe will suit us a little bit better," said ten Doeschate in his extended reply. "You've got to be prepared to fight really hard and this game is going to go deep. The only thing I would say is maybe the toss makes it even more important. The toss becomes even more important in these conditions.

"If you are going to be prepared to lose the toss, you have to put on a display like that today, really fight for every run and make sure you stay in the game. Like I said, at some point the pressure is going to come, it's just going to come later in this game. The template for us is probably closer to this than playing on some of the wickets we have played on."

Mohammed Siraj. PTI

# Head sends England spinning down

### Make-shift opener slams ton as Aussies wrap up crushing win

PERTH, AFP

Makeshift opener Travis Head smacked an explosive 69-ball century to power Australia to victory in a high-octane first Ashes Test on Saturday as England meekly surrendered in the Perth Stadium cauldron.

Chasing 205 to win, Head slammed 123 as the hosts romped home on day two by eight wickets in an electric start to the five-match series. Marnus Labuschagne was 51 not out and Steve Smith on two.

"Wow, what a couple of days. It's been unbelievable," said Head. "The emotions are pretty high.

"They (England) were seriously good out there yesterday and started to drag it back, so we knew we couldn't afford to let the game slip. To be able to contribute the way I did, it feels pretty special."

Head's heroics came on the back of a blistering spell from marauding pace pair Scott Boland and Mitchell Starc after lunch that sparked a stunning England collapse.

The tourists were cruising at 65-1 and building an ominous second-innings lead, but Boland and Starc left them reeling with four wickets in as many overs.

A ruthless Boland accounted for Ben Duckett (28), Ollie Pope (33) and Harry Brook (0) in the space of 11 balls.

When Starc removed skipper Ben Stokes (2), England were flailing at 88-6 and the veteran paceman had bagged a 10-wicket haul for only the third time after his first innings 7-58, a career-best.

England were partially rescued by a crucial 50-run stand between Gus Atkinson (37) and Brydon Carse (20) before being rolled for 164 at tea.

When they returned, Usman Khawaja again failed to show as opener as he battles back stiffness, with Australia signalling their intent by sending in Head.

Head, who has opened nine times previously in Test cricket, quickly got into his destructive rhythm, crunching some lovely boundaries including big sixes off Carse and Mark Wood.

He made it look easy, making a mockery of the struggles other batsmen had on the bouncy track, bringing up his half-century in 36 balls, passing 4,000 Test runs in the process.

Looking to emulate him, debutant Jake Weatherald also went on the attack, but it cost him, out for 23 after a mistimed pull shot was taken by Ben Duckett off Carse.

An unruffled Head kept the pressure on, slamming four boundaries in one Stokes over and sending a six back over the head of Jofra Archer on his way to a 10th Test ton.

Australia resumed on a paltry 123-9 in their first innings and added just nine before Nathan Lyon was removed by Carse for four to leave England with a 40-run advantage.

**Brief scores:** England: 172 & 164 all out in 34.4 overs (Ben Duckett 28, Ollie Pope 33, Gus Atkinson 37; Mitchell Starc 3-55, Scott Boland 4-33, Brendan Doggett 3-51) lt to Australia (O/n: 123/9): 132 all out in 45.2 overs (Jofra Archer 2-11, Brydon Carse 3-45, Ben Stokes 5-23) & 205/2 in 28.2 overs (Travis Head 123, Marnus Labuschagne 51 n.o.; Bryson Carse 2-44) by 8 wkts.
**Series:** Australia lead 5-match series 1-0.
**PoM:** Mitchell Starc.
**Second Test:** Dec 4-8 (Brisbane).

Australia's Travis Head celebrates after scoring a match-winning century on the second day of the first Ashes Test in Perth on Saturday. REUTERS

# India take on Korea in opener

IPOH (MALAYSIA), PTI

Five-time champions and the second-most successful team in the tournament, India will have to be on their guard when they take on Korea in their opening match of the 31st edition of the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup hockey tournament here on Sunday.

The prestigious invitational tournament will be held here from November 23 to 30.

This will be India's first appearance in the tournament since 2019, when they finished runners-up.

This year's edition will feature India, Belgium, Canada, Korea, New Zealand and hosts Malaysia, competing in a round-robin format, with the top two teams qualifying for the final.

After Korea, India, led by Sanjay, will then face Belgium on November 24, Malaysia on November 26, New Zealand on November 27, before concluding their league stage campaign against Canada on November 29.

With India building towards the 2026 FIH Men's Hockey World Cup and the 2026 Asian Games, this tournament provides a platform for competitive preparation while also testing new combinations.

Sanjay

India have rested some of their senior players like regular captain Harmanpreet Singh, Manpreet Singh among others for this tournament.

Ahead of the tournament, Craig Fulton's wards underwent an extensive training camp in Bengaluru.

**India squad: Goalkeepers:** Pawan, Mohith HS. **Defenders:** Poovanna Chandura Boby, Nilam Sanjeep Xess, Yashdeep Siwach, Jugraj Singh, Amit Rohidas, Sanjay. **Midfielders:** Rajinder Singh, Raj Kumar Pal, Nilakanta Sharma, Rabichandra Singh Moirangthem, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Mohammed Raheel Mouseen. **Forwards:** Sukhjeet Singh, Shilanand Lakra, Selvam Karthi, Aditya Arjun Lalage, Dilpreet Singh, Abhishek.

## Pakistan outplay India A in semis

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Pakistan, riding on Muhammad Asif's brilliance, outplayed India A 3-1 to storm into the final of the World Cup of snooker in Muscat on Saturday.

Although India started well with ace cueist Pankaj Advani winning the first frame in the best-of-five frame clash, Asif had other ideas as he came up with a splendid show to dash India's hopes.

For India, who hammered France 3-0 in the quarterfinals in the morning, Advani began the proceedings with a fine 85-21 victory over Asjad Iqbal. The win also avenged Advani's loss in the individual event earlier.

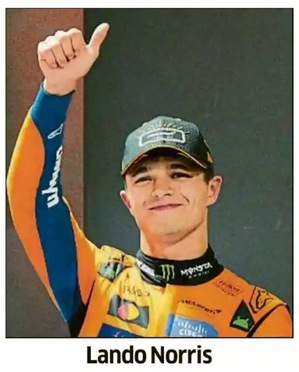
In the second frame, Brijesh Damani was reduced to a mere spectator as Asif punished the Indian's poor opening break with a frame-clinching break.

**Results: Semifinals:** Pakistan bt India A: 3-1 (Asjad Iqbal lt to Pankaj Advani 21-85; Muhammad Asif bt Brijesh Damani 120 (77) -23; Asif/ Iqbal bt Advani/ Damani 75 (46) -47; Asif bt Advani 73 (61) -9).

## B'luru to host qualifying round

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The qualifying round of the prestigious 79th Santosh Trophy will be held in Bengaluru from December 20 at the Bangalore Football Stadium, with hosts Karnataka, Services, Goa and Lakshadweep have all been pitted in Group H.

"KSFA is proud to host one of the toughest of the 9 zonal groups of the 2025-26 Santosh Trophy National Football Championship," NA Haris, President, KSFA, said.



Lando Norris

# Championship leader Norris grabs 'stressful' pole in Las Vegas

LAS VEGAS, AFP

Lando Norris maintained his charge towards a maiden Formula One crown on Friday by grabbing his third pole position in as many races at the Las Vegas Grand Prix.

The British McLaren driver -- who has surged into a 24-point lead in the drivers' championship after wins in Brazil and Mexico -- clocked a fastest time of one minute 47.934 seconds in treacherous conditions.

Red Bull's Max Verstappen was second fastest in 1min 48.257sec with Williams' Carlos Sainz third.

Norris' title rival and McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri will start fifth after finishing more than a second off the pace.

In wet conditions on the Sin City street circuit, the 26-year-old Norris produced a dazzling flying lap to snatch pole with three blistering sectors.

"Boy that was stressful, stressful as hell," Norris said after clinching pole.

"I felt like the first few sectors were good, but it's so slippery out there. As soon as you hit the curb a little bit like I did, you snap one way and then the other way and come close to hitting the wall," he added.

"So not the nicest of conditions. But I'm happy it stopped raining and we could get a good qualifying."

Norris, who had looked tentative in the final practice earlier Friday, when he finished bottom of the timesheets, said he had not been expecting rain during qualifying.

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## REAL ESTATE SELLING

### Sites

### Anjanapura

**BDA-SITES FOR** Sale Banashankari 6th Stage 40x60 10500 Per sqft, 30x40 North Facing 12000 Per sqft Call-Rajesh: 9945610779

**ANJANAPURA 10TH** Block BDA Property 40x60, Prime Location, West facing site 11,500/- Call- 9845000299/ 9980808155

**SITE-FOR SALE** 40x60 South Facing Anjanapura 8th Block Owner Meeting 10000 Per sqft Call:7892035229 9845064043

### Airport Road

**"SALE SITE** 40x60 BIAAPA approved before International Airport close to Defence & Aero park Rs.5900/`P.sft. 9845286505"

### Banashankari

**BANASHANKARI 6TH** STAGE- BDA-AVAILABLE/ WANTED 20x30, 30x40 40x60, 50x80 SITES. BRINDAVAN ASSOCIATES- 9980863245/ 9945333993

**DC CONVERSION** SITES for sale in BSK 6th stage, 11th block, 40'x70' & 70'x120' North facing, 9000/- sqft: Call 9845380312.

**BANASHANKARI 6TH** Stage, 9th Block, 50x80, East opposite to School Rs. 9000/- Sqft. Owner:- 9886052148.

### BTM Layout

**31X51 SOUTH** East Corner Site For Sale At BTM Mico Layout Near Venkateswara Temple- 9845760178

### Basavanagudi

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### Basaweshwaranagar

**WEST- FACING** 40X60 semi-commercial site for sale in Basaveshwara Nagar. Prime location, clear title.Only genuine buyers. Contact: 9916821582

### Hoskote

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### J P Nagar

**"J.P.NAGAR, SRINIDHI_LAYOUT** 30x51 Residential Site, East_Facing, BBMP A_Katha, Full White. Direct Owner: 9845249799/ 9845088449"

### Kengeri

***DIRECT OWNER*** 30x40 BDA W/F Site Sale Kengeri Satellite Town,beside corner, near_Surana College. 9742681666/ 9886634578

### Koramangala

**KORAMANGALA 8TH** Block Commercial Property for Sale 3200sqft. INR 37,700k/sqft Negotiable Whatsapp Message Only 9663766492 Brokers Excuse

### Kempegowda Layout

**NADAPRABHU KEMPEGOWDA** LAYOUT BDA SITES SELLING/ BUYING 20x30, 30x40, 40x60, 50x80. Genuine Buyers Call: 9632146784, 9731162167.

**COMERCIAL PROPERTY** KEMPEGOWDA LAYOUT BDA Site No.41 50x80 A Sector 6th Block 100 feet Road Genuine Buyers Only Broker Excuse: 8884709409

**KEMPEGOWDA LAYOUT,** Commercial/ Residential BDA Site for Sale 20x30, 30x40, 40x60, 50x80 Contact Kumar 9945119449

**BDA SITE** West facing, measuring 50x80, 1st K Sector, 60ft Double Road Commercial , Kempegowda Layout, Site for Sale. 12000/- per Sqft. Contact: +91 9353534340

### Nagarabhavi

**SITE FOR** SALE BDA Nagarabhavi 10th block Near Nagarabhavi Club 40x75 West facing 40 feet Road Genuine buyers only Broker excuse Ph: 8884709409/ 7899570235

**NAGARABHAVI BDA** Approved D-Group Layout 30x50 East Facing Site Sale Rate 16000/- Per Sqft: 9845488488

**RHCS LAYOUT** A Block BDA 30x45 NF, Road Hit Site Opposite Park 12500/- Psft: 9845488488

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**BDA SITE** FOR SALE in Nagarbhavi, 10th Block 3rd cross South face Site no: 63 For further details contact: Muthu R 9880780002

### Rajarajeshwari Nagar

**IDEAL HOMES** 43x45, 43x47 with old house, 46x60 for sale vasavi Estates 9880127399

### R T Nagar

**R.T.NAGAR HMT** LAYOUT 40X60 Site Close to CBI MAIN ROAD Excellent Location Call: 9341260828

**R.T.NAGAR 40X60** BDA Site Excellent Location With 2 Floor Old Building For Sale Call: 9341260828

### Vijayanagar

**SITE FOR** SALE: 60X90 WEST FACING WOC ROAD RPC LAYOUT ONLY GENUINE BUYERS CONTACT: 6363250343

### Vishweshwariah Layout

**BUYING/ SELLING** 20x30, 30x40, 40x60, 50x80 BDA Sites VISHVESHWARAIAH LAYOUT, KEMPEGOWDA LAYOUT, Contact: 9035470616

**DIRECT OWNER** 30x40, 40x60 Site/ House Near Metro Station, Vishweshwaraiah Layout, Kempegowda Layout: 9620696913/ 9880781399

**"30X40 NORTH_FACING** PRIME RESIDENTIAL BDA 1ST`BLOCK VISHVESHWARAIAH LAYOUT, 40x60`RESIDENTIAL-SEMI COMMERCIAL 60`FEET`ROAD KALYANI LAYOUT IMMEDIATE`SALE. 9845143579"

**BDA SITE** SALE VISHWESHWARAIAH LAYOUT 6TH BLOCK 30X40 WEST NEAR OXFORD COLLEGE 40X60 NEAR KLE COLLEGE: 8892901567

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# REAL ESTATE SELLING

## Sites

### Vishweshwariah Layout

**VISHWESHWARAIAH LAYOUT 6TH** Block BDA 30X40, WF, Near KLE Law College. Direct Owner Meeting: 9980860138

**VISHWESHWARAIAH LAYOUT,** BDA 6th Block, 20x30 West Facing, 30 Feet Road Direct Owner Contact: 6360050356

**BDA SITE** for Sale 30×40 East facing Builder Location Vishweshwaraiah Layout Near BDA Complex & 100 ft Ring Road Rs.13,500/- negotiable Contact: 8970306030

**40X60 NORTH** Facing site, SMV 5th block, DC converted, BBMP A & E Khata. Contact: 9900266984

### Vidyaranyapura

**IMMEDIATE REGISTRATION** 60'x40' BEL 2 Block, (Independent 4 BHK Duplex) Prime Location 16000/- S/F: 9844264852

### Whitefield

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### Bidadi

**SITE FOR** SALE, 40x60 'E' Khatha, North facing, at Bidadi 2 Sites Available, No Agreement, 50 Lakhs each. Mobile: 9902722354, 9035200896, 9538995333

### Doddaballapur Road

**PRESTIGE NORTH-WEST** County 125X80 Prestige Marigold 50X80, Century Eden 40X50, Adarsh Savana 50X80, Supreme-Estates 9632974714

### Rajanukunte

**SALE 25X90** BIAAPA approved ready-to build site in developed layout near Rajanukunte. Rs.4500/ sft. 9741064589

## House

### Kumaraswamy Layout

**2040SFT 3BHK-DPLX4.30CR,19X40_4BHK** Tplx 2.10cr chikkalsandra 1270sft_2bhk,flat_6500/-1000sft,2BHK Flat-72L 20x30,3units Home 1.20cr,:8904210201

### Nagarabhavi

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### Vishweshwariah Layout

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### Vidyaranyapura

**4-STORY HOUSE** FOR SALE in Ramchandrapura, Jalahalli (Post) Bangalore 13. Size: 20X30. Built area 2700 Sqft: 1,75,00,000/- 9880450523.

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### Jakkur

**FLAT FOR** Sale Spacious 3BHK 1800 Sqft E/F Fully Furnished Gated Community with Good amenities 2.2Cr Negotiable Near Manyata Tech Park: 7026500097

### J P Nagar

**Flat for Sale 2/3 Bedroom in Majestic Fortune Apartment JP Nagar 7th Phase**
Majestic Fortune J.P. Nagar, 7th Phase O.C. Obtained Ready to move, Contact: 90191 63704 / 93412 28681

### Kanakapura Road

**OFF KANAKAPURA** Road Near Adigas Hotel 9th Main Bagegowda Layout 2-BHK Fully Furnished 1200Sq.ft Flat For Sale. Only Vegetarians Need Contact:-9845303631

**INVESTMENT PROPERTIES** AVAILABLE FOR SALE NEAR METRO STATIONS, KANAKAPURA ROAD. SARAKKI HOMES: 9663676464

### Nagarabhavi

**FLATS FOR-SALE @** Nagarabhavi Chandra Layout 2 & 3BHK Ready to Move In Good Location Call:9538472420 9845066608

## Agricultural Land

### Out-Station

**AGRICULTURAL LAND** For-Sale at Yadgir Dist Naykal Village Near-to Main Road 11.28 Acres. 9880563629 9448473358

## Commerical

### Anjanapura

**COMMERCIAL SITE** FOR SALE Site no. 685 Anjanapura 8th block, north facing 50*80 Good location call: 8197062035.

### Hebbal

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## Industrial & Factory

### Tumkur Road

**SALE/ BUILT** to suit, 10 Acres Industrial Warehouse Land Opposite to Namaste Bangalore Hotel. 9141326819

# REAL ESTATE BUYING

## Sites

### Anjanapura

**WANTED BDA** & BBMP SITES Anjanapura Banashankari 6th Stage BCC & BCMC Layout JP nagar 8th/ 9th Phase Narayana Nagar 1st 2nd 3rd Block NPKL Layout Vishveshwaraiah Layout. Contact: 9845298419

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### Banashankari

**BDA SITES** WANTED ARKAVATHY ANJANAPURA BANASHANKARI 6TH STAGE VISHWESHWARAIAH KEMPEGOWDA ANY BDA LAYOUT: 9845062822/ 8660751654

### Vishweshwariah Layout

***BUYING/ SELLING*** 20x30,30x40,40x60 50x80 BDA sites at VISHVESHWARAIAH LAYOUT, BSK 6th-stage. Contact: 9844533371/ 9341733480

# RENTAL PROPERTIES

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# BUSINESS

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# PERSONAL

## Change of Name

**CHANGE OF NAME**
I, **Malini J,** residing at No. 16, Bank of Baroda Colony, Puttenahalli, J.P. Nagar 7th Phase, Bengaluru-560078., have changed my name to **MALINI KANTAN** vide affidavit dated 21.11.2025 before notary B.G. Sriram, Bengaluru.
Henceforth I shall be called **MALINI KANTAN** only

# PUBLIC NOTICE

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client ('client') is desirous of entering into certain transaction in connection with the immovable property morefully described in the 'Schedule' hereunder and is hereinafter referred to as the 'Schedule Property' with **Mr. Vijay Pawar,** son of Mr. Govind Narayanarao Pawar, residing at No. 23, Pulliyar Koil Street, Ashoknagar, Bangalore 560025 ('Owner'). The Owner has represented to our Client that he is the sole and the absolute owner of the Schedule Property, with unrestricted rights of alienation over the same.

Notice is hereby given to the general public that any person/s other than the Owner, asserting any right, title, charge, lien, claim/s or any interest whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Property is/ are hereby called upon to submit to the undersigned, their claim/s, if any, over the Schedule Property or their objections, if any, to the aforementioned transaction. The said claim/s or objections must be in writing, together with documentary proof of such claim/s or objections, so as to reach us at the address given below within a period of **21 (twenty one)** days from the date of publication of this Notice. If no such claim/s or objections are received within the said period of 21 (twenty one) days, it shall be deemed that no one else other than the Owner has/ have any right, title, charge, lien, claim/s or any interest whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Property. Further any claims or alleged interests, if any, which are not received within the said period of 21 (twenty one) days shall be deemed to have been consciously waived and disregarded for all intents and purposes and shall thereafter not be binding on our Client and our Client would be at liberty to proceed with the said transaction in connection with the Schedule Property.

**SCHEDULE**
**(Description of the Schedule Property)**

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing BBMP Municipal No. 10/2, PID No. 70-46-10/2, (earlier part of converted Survey No. 10 and Survey No. 12, situated at Akkithimmenahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore), measuring 43,560 Square Feet, situated at Kengal Hanumanthaiah Road, Ward No. 70 – Shanthi Nagar, Bangalore and bounded on:

**East by :** Properties belonging to Mr. Nallappa, Mr. Nagaiah and Mr. Chinnaiah;
**West by :** Property belonging to Mr. Channaiah, son of Mr. Donne Muniyappa and others and K.H. Road;
**North by :** Byatappa's Thopu; and
**South by :** Remaining land of Mr. Papaiah @ Pappanna.

**Date: 22.11.2025**
**Place: Bangalore**

**Ms. Brijita Prakash, Partner**
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STATE, MARKET, SOCIETY

# Cycle of urban distress, one uproar after another

**Ashwin Mahesh**
A social entrepreneur, founder of Mapunity and LVBL, and co-founder, Lithium, wakes up with hope for the city and society, goes to bed with a sigh
@ashwinmahesh

It seems every few weeks, something is happening in government that agitates a lot of people – the latest is the cost of street sweeping machines that the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) proposes to rent. In social media and in the press, this has triggered a round of outrage. Before this was the chaos on the Outer Ring Road, and a little before that, we were agonising about potholes. The next one is probably a few weeks away.

What's common to these outpourings? First, there is a large deficit of trust that makes people instinctively believe that what they are seeing is one more in a long line of loot and maladministration. That's not always the fault of the current administrators, but it is a reality they need to confront, nonetheless.

The second common feature in a lot of these flare-ups is that many decisions in government appear to be taken at odds with expert knowledge, planning or even common sense. Wouldn't the roads need to be in proper condition before we spend a ton of money on machines to clean them? Is this really the way to fill a pothole? Wouldn't the road network in East Bengaluru need to be complete to manage traffic there? Do we need a tunnel road through the city, especially when a proposed Metro line would be parallel to it?

There are also issues of governance. Cleaning streets is a municipal function, so why is GBA contracting for the machines rather than the five municipal corporations? And what is the source of funds – will GBA assert control over our property taxes and other revenues of the corporations? Will elected corporators – one assumes there will be an election one day! – accept this? There is no clarity.

Managing our cities was never easy. When it became clear in the 1990s that India lacked a proper governance framework for the inevitable urbanisation, Parliament enacted the 74th Amendment to the Constitution, which envisioned devolving power and finances to local elected councils. In practice, however, states have been reluctant to let go of their powers and have found various less-than-legal ways of hanging on to them.

That has come at a price. Elected representatives of local councils struggled to provide public goods and services because they lacked the means. Meanwhile, many responsibilities were given to parastatals, but without public accountability, they've been happy to just mark attendance and plod along.

But one can't go far or fast on a potholed road, to use a metaphor from these times. And *jugaad* has its limits. Indian cities look shabby, and they struggle for economic and social vitality even when judged alongside cities in other developing countries. And their leadership is so disempowered that people are more curious about mayoral races in London and New York than in their own cities.

In a late wake-up, the Union government has formed a few working groups shepherded by the National Institute of Urban Affairs to propose reforms in a few areas, such as governance of rural areas that are becoming urban.

Both UPA and NDA have tried their versions of large schemes to transform the urban landscape. By and large, those have failed. But that's not because experts proposed the wrong things. It's primarily because, after listening to good advice from well-meaning people, our political leaders chose to continue doing the wrong things anyway.

The challenges of urban India are social and political; they are not technical or managerial. We're not going to overcome them by discovering a new scheme or recipe for doing things better. Our only hope of turning the corner towards well-managed cities lies in the one thing we have never tried – constitutional and local self-government.

During a recent conversation about the proposed (at that time) GBA Act, one of the participants in the discussion pointed out that we've repeatedly tried to govern the city in different ways – changing boundaries, merging and demerging areas, expanding the boundaries of the city, creating new parastatals, etc. The one thing we haven't tried properly is what's in the Constitution.

The outrages will continue. They could even get more frequent. We can either wring our hands, respond chaotically and frantically, and propose one more tweak of a broken system, or we can do the sensible and democratic thing. Hold elections regularly, devolve funds and power to councils and wards, and most importantly, keep the state and national governments out of the administration of urban India.

We need to believe that when people self-govern through local councils and wards, they're more likely to get things right, or that they'll change course when they make mistakes because it is in their interest to do so. The alternative is to lurch from one uproar to the next.

SARKARI SECRETS

# Where the disabled don't count

Next month, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD Act) will turn ten. Enacted by Parliament in December 2016 and implemented since April 2017, this law gives effect to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which India ratified in 2007. The avowed purpose of the RPwD Act is to ensure respect for the inherent dignity of persons with disabilities (PwDs) and enable their inclusion and effective participation in society. Under this seminal law, duty-holders in the public and private sectors are obligated to provide equality of opportunity and make physical spaces and services accessible to them in a non-discriminatory manner. Governments are required to promote respect for difference and their acceptance in society, with particular emphasis on enabling disabled children to develop their capacities and preserve their identities.

Yet, do we know how many of us are PwDs? The 2011 Census counted 2.68 crore such individuals, i.e., 2.21% of the then population. In the same year, the World Health Organisation estimated that about 15% of the global population lives with some form of physical and/or psycho-social disability. Our census enumerators might have recognised only a minuscule proportion of this largely invisible segment of society. This raises the all-important question – were enumerators adequately trained to recognise and count every person with disability? The outwardly appearance of persons with blood disorders like haemophilia, thalassemia, and sickle cell disease may mask their disability, unlike other disabilities, which are perceptible.

Shameer Rishad, who belongs to Gen-Z, which is often criticised for not understanding "how the world works", asked our Registrar General of Census about this very issue. Through an RTI application, he enquired about the number of training sessions conducted for enumerators to count PwDs in the upcoming 2027 census, copies of training materials developed for this purpose, and the expenditure incurred so far on training. Their reply: no such training manuals exist, no PwD-specific training has been conducted so far and, believe it or not, no expenditure was incurred because there is no separate budgetary allocation! He plans to file a formal complaint with the Chief Commissioner for PwDs on this issue.

**Venkatesh Nayak**
wakes up every morning thinking someone somewhere is hiding something

Shameer asked the next set of questions – so fundamental to our democracy – of the Union Ministry of Law and Justice. How many adult PwDs are enrolled as electors across India, gender- and disability-wise, how many of them voted during the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha elections between 2014 and 2024, how many voted by using the special assistance services at polling stations or postal ballots, and how many contested in those elections and won? He also asked about the steps taken to make polling booths accessible to PwDs.

That RTI application was transferred to the Election Commission of India (ECI). The ECI, in what has become a signature style, replied that compiling and providing the information sought would disproportionately divert their resources. However, they furnished a copy of the 2023 instructions sent to all states and UTs for providing facilities for PwDs and senior citizens to participate in the elections.

These instructions contain a major revelation. After their enrolment, a separate list of PwD voters, with the nature of their disability, is prepared, mapping them in respect of each polling station, to provide assistance services to enable them to cast their vote. However, this list is a *sarkari* secret, and the main electoral roll does not identify them as PwDs, to "protect their privacy".

On polling day, the presiding officers record in Form 14A a list of the blind and infirm electors who visited the polling station to cast their vote along with an adult companion. The returning officers compile this information, constituency-wise, in their reports sent to the ECI after the results are declared. So, the ECI has all this information, but it will not release even basic statistical data about PwDs. Voters with other kinds of disabilities are not even counted.

During the Supreme Court hearings relating to the Bihar SIR exercise, the ECI voiced its hyper-allergic attitude towards NGOs that analyse electoral data and point at problems. Some 200-plus retired judges and babus have publicly criticised all those who ask difficult questions of the ECI. But if data is either not collected or not disclosed, how can the efficacy of the arrangements to make the poll process disabled-friendly be assessed? How will the State ensure the inclusion of PwDs in the democratic process? How do we make the world work better?

GADFLY

# No closure with bosses from hell

I attended the FICCI Frames conclave in Mumbai in October. It was to educate oneself on the goings-on in the media-related industries, to notice what gestures the government was making since talking up India's 'creative' sectors, and terming them, in the PM's words, the "orange economy".

There, after two years in one case, and thirteen in another, I saw two of my former bosses, septuagenarian men. One was a former vice chancellor. The other, the baron of a once path-breaking Indian magazine that is now a rag, shepherded by his daughter, who was my reporting boss's boss. I met both men, separately, and it led to a spiky, small scene, whose details I shall spare. It caused me to reflect on the nature and structure of their toxicity, the institutions they sullied, leading to employees leaving them steadily.

Allow me my bias. I'm far from a 'good' person, and may not even be the 'ideal' employee. But what I do know, and have honed over the years, are some core competencies. Over 25 years of employment, a decade in the media and a little more than that in higher education, I know what value I may bring to an organisation, and what I don't. Over these years of traversing spheres in different print media and higher education, I've come to conclude that toxic bosses are now the norm and not the exception. Of course, rarely are two people or bosses toxic in the same way. Yet the one quality they all possess, in my experience, is that they always know better than you, the employee. It's worse if your work specialism isn't theirs: even if you may have spent half a lifetime on an aspect of your niche, they know it better than you.

That time, moments before walking up to the media baron, my thoughts surged back to the showdown in the UFO-like Noida office in early 2012. On how his daughter, who runs the group, is known to scream at the office staff. How her rage often enraged a well-known senior editor (also a cinema reporter), who'd pass that rage down to cogs in the wheel like me. I recalled how their magazine sent me to cover the Kumbh Mela of 2012, briefing the photographer and me to only interview non-Indians (read: white people), as that'd make for "good copy". How I had failed in that mission. How, after my reporting editor screamed at me on the phone since the baron's daughter had screamed at her in the office, saying I was no good on the job, I forced a young white man at a ghat to forcibly give me a byte and concede to a photo.

**Rahul Jayaram**
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That man, two years later, scoured the Web and wrote me an email saying how offended he was that I had broken his spell of silence. I had taken a racist pitch and did a racist story online, invading the privacy of a fellow human. My photographer colleague chose to sit away from me on the flight from Varanasi to Delhi, unable to bear my controlled, invective-laden mutterings directed towards my bosses. He'd survived in the organisation somehow, and what was happening to me had happened to many employees there. I returned to the Noida office from Delhi airport with my bags, but didn't find the baron or his daughter there. I saw and stared down my reporting manager who'd shouted at me on the phone, raised my voice to a shriek demanding an apology for her behaviour, which didn't issue forth, and I quit full-time journalism since.

The higher education man, now a retired vice-chancellor, taught electrical engineering most of his life. As I left the university he founded, I remember the last two months of my time there getting squeezed at work and writing a 3,000-word exit letter detailing my fifteen months there, and how it may have led to the months-later exit of my immediate (also toxic) boss and the vice chancellor. Toxic bosses often have minions who act like their twins. They owe people like me the minimum of an apology. Knowing them, that shall never happen.

EMPIRE OF THE MIND

# Memory in the age of forgetting

We live surrounded by reminders, yet we remember less. Our calendars alert us to birthdays, our phones store our photographs, and our devices autocomplete our thoughts. In this age of infinite storage, forgetting should have become impossible. And yet, something curious has happened: the more we record, the less we recall; the more we preserve, the less we understand. Human memory – once the most intimate of capacities – has been outsourced to machines. What we used to carry in our minds, we now carry in our pockets. Our personal histories are archived in clouds we never see, and our collective past is compressed into searchable databases. It is as if memory itself has been liberated from the burden of being human. But in the process, it may also have lost its soul.

We are facing the crisis of digital remembrance. Every generation has worried about the erosion of memory, but ours is the first to make forgetting a feature, not a flaw. We live in what the philosopher Paul Virilio once called 'the tyranny of real time' – a world where history has no time to happen. This digital amnesia has consequences beyond nostalgia. Memory gives continuity to identity. When we forget collectively, we lose our sense of who we are as a society. The erosion of public memory makes democracies vulnerable to manipulation because a people who do not remember are easy to persuade. Revisionism flourishes when recollection fades.

For most of human history, memory was an art. Ancient cultures cultivated elaborate techniques of recall – the Indian oral traditions, the Greek *ars memoriae*, the monastic practices of meditation. Remembering was not just about storage; it was about synthesis. To remember was to interpret, to connect, to assign meaning. Today, remembering is a mechanical act of recording. We take photos of sunsets instead of watching them, record lectures instead of listening, and bookmark articles instead of reading. In our quest to capture, we have forgotten how to experience. The device remembers so that we don't have to. But digital memory is not memory – it is mere data persistence. True memory is selective, shaped by emotion and meaning. We remember what matters, not just what happens. A photograph can store an image of a moment, but not its feeling. The algorithms that archive our lives do not distinguish between the trivial and the profound. They flatten experience into equivalence – every moment equally retrievable, and therefore equally disposable.

**Gurucharan Gollerkeri**
The former civil servant enjoys traversing the myriad spaces of ideas, thinkers, and books

Forgetting is not always accidental. It can also be organised. Nations, like individuals, curate their memories – what they choose to commemorate and quietly erase. The politics of forgetting decides whose stories are told, whose statues stand, whose anniversaries are observed. In India, as elsewhere, the struggle over memory is also a struggle over meaning. Every renaming, every rewriting of textbooks, every debate about who built what and who destroyed what is a contest for the right to define the past. When we forget how to remember critically, history becomes propaganda. The irony is that a society obsessed with heritage often forgets its own lessons. We preserve monuments but neglect memories; we celebrate ancestors but ignore their anxieties. To remember responsibly is to confront complexity, not to sanitise it. It is to accept that our past, like our present, is made of contradictions. There is also the personal cost of forgetting. A quieter, more intimate kind of forgetting at work – the erosion of personal memory. The less we use memory, the less we train our attention. And without attention, even the richest experiences fail to leave a trace. Memory, after all, is not a storage problem but a meaning problem. To remember deeply is to reflect, to weave an experience into the story of one's life.

What, then, does it mean to reclaim memory in the age of forgetting? It does not mean renouncing technology or retreating into nostalgia. It means restoring slowness and intention to the act of remembering. To begin with, we can practice mindful recall – deliberate reflection without devices. Keeping a journal, writing letters, even recounting stories orally – these are ways of re-inscribing experience into consciousness. They transform memory from data into meaning. In education, too, we must teach memory not as rote learning but as narrative understanding. Students should learn not just to memorise facts but to trace their significance across time. Societies, like individuals, mature only when they can remember without fear and forget without denial.

We must learn, once again, that memory is not a file to be accessed but a flame to be tended. To remember is to care. And to care, in an age of distraction, is the rarest act of all.

JUDGMENT DAY

# System glitch: Making legal sense of technology's perils

**Nigam Nuggehalli**
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A few days ago, I read an article about the disruption at Delhi's airport because of a malfunctioning air traffic control system. Despite reading the article twice, I couldn't understand either the problem or the solution. The only thing I gathered is that for people like me, the technology in air navigation systems is a black box. If something goes wrong, we will neither understand how it went wrong nor understand what can be done to fix the problem. Vast swathes of our lives are now hostage to the mysteries of technology.

There is an even more serious problem. Innocent people might be blamed for problems created by technology. Today, I discuss one such miscarriage of justice – this case is from the United Kingdom, but the lessons we can learn apply to any place that relies on technology to make its systems more efficient. The UK's post office system consists of sub-postmasters (SPMs) managing their respective post offices under contract. The UK Post Office deployed a software system called Horizon to keep track of expenses and outcomes in the post offices. Unfortunately, Horizon was prone to glitches, which led to a financial reconciliation problem in many post offices. The blame fell on the SPMs, many of whom were removed from their services. Careers were interrupted and lives were destroyed.

The SPMs took the UK Post Office to court. In *Bates v Post Office Ltd.* (cases decided between 2017 and 2019), the court said the Horizon systems were to blame. The SPMs were exonerated, the UK Post Office head Paula Vennells stepped down, and royal honours bestowed on her were taken away. The government introduced legislation to ensure that the hundreds of unfairly maligned SPMs were provided fair compensation. A made-for-TV docudrama, *Mr Bates v The Post Office*, was released in 2024 to much acclaim and consternation.

But the problem remains. If technology becomes too difficult to understand but too easy to accept, innocent people could be blamed. In the United States, facial recognition technology helps the police pick people as potential suspects in criminal cases. Once the police start identifying people based on AI, it becomes convenient for them to arrest people on that basis alone and difficult for the arrested to prove their innocence.

Can something be done about the perils of technology? Technology must be understood first before it is harnessed in furtherance of finance or legal system reform. Technology is useful in processing and validating facts, but when it begins making judgments in the guise of determining facts, we are in trouble. There is a difference between gathering and organising information on incarcerated individuals seeking bail and deciding whether granting bail in individual cases is the right thing to do. Technology can dominate the former inquiry but not the latter decision.

There is another solution in navigating the complexities of legal relationships around the use of technology. The Bates case consisted of multiple judgments. In one of the orders, the judge found that the UK Post Office, as a matter of contractual law, did not act in good faith. It wasn't only about the software malfunctioning; the problem was that the Post Office did not share the extent of its issues with its contractual staff. Normally, there is no requirement to act in good faith in contracts, but the judge said that, in what are termed relational contracts, parties are legally required to act in a cooperative rather than a competitive manner.

Perhaps the Bates case is an occasion for us to think about regulating technology differently. Restraining the adverse impact of technology need not be related directly to the technology itself. It can be controlled through other legal relationships. In the Bates case, it was the mutual contractual obligations that led towards the accountability of the Post Office. In the criminal justice system, where matters such as bail hinge on the application of sophisticated technology, some aspects of administrative law relating to due process and fair hearing can restrain the adverse impact of technological decision-making. For example, a personal hearing ought to be provided to citizens adversely affected by algorithmic decisions.

I think it's not as much of a problem when technology makes judgment calls in our personal lives. It's the same technology that fires both bail processing and dating applications. Perhaps it's up to us to choose if we want to submit our personal lives to the vagaries of technology. But in the public sphere, individuals can't choose to disable the deployment of technology. We must use technology only after a careful analysis of how it operates. Once we let the technology genie out of the bottle, our wishes may well be granted, but we might regret what we asked for.

DECCAN HERALD
Sunday
November 23, 2025

# Handloom, but make it hip

**The often-criticised Gen Z is enthusiastically reimagining India's traditional handlooms — pairing Ajrakh corsets with jeans, draping Chanderi over trainers, and sporting ikat hats — creating lively new takes on age-old crafts, discovers Sweekruthi K**

DH ILLUSTRATION: SAJITH KUMAR

A quick browse through recent Bollywood celebrity red carpet looks, thrift stores and Instagram outfit pic dumps will likely reveal one thing in common: Whether in Jamdani, Ajrakh or Bandhani form, India's artistry in textiles and prints is at the forefront of trending fashion. This may sound like nothing new — every few years or so, designers centring Indian fabrics or stars wearing regional prints is hailed as a "revival of handloom."

What seems to set this recent wave apart are the wearers at the helm of this resurgence, and their approach to styling. Clad in a halter-neck blockprint kurta, wide-leg jeans and sneakers from a well-known Boston-based American company, 21-year-old Nimisha Patel explains the appeal: "Indian prints offer such distinct visuals, making them very interesting to style and mix up my looks. I really like pairing bright contrast designs with grey and earth tones."

The sheer range of variety available is another boon, she adds. "When you start researching, there are literally so many types of prints and fabrics from different regions, and it's like there is something for everyone, and for every aesthetic. Some are muted, some are bright, some are sheer and some are heavier and intense," says the BCom student.

## Traditional fabrics as a statement

Research shows that Gen Z and millennials are also choosing traditional prints and fabrics as a statement. Antithetical to fast fashion and its vast, debilitating impact on garment workers and communities, their choices are intentionally leaning towards sustainably sourced, locally made and ecologically conscious. A report by First Insight shows that 62% of Gen Z shoppers prefer sustainable brands and 73% are willing to pay more for eco-friendly products. Handlooms inherently fit the bill.

Many point out that, visually, too, the traditional prints make a statement of identity. "Youngsters are celebrating their 'Indianness' in arts, crafts and culture. They are being exposed to different cultures, they are educated, well-travelled, and are learning to celebrate this Indian identity," says Pavithra Muddaya, a handloom practitioner for over five decades.

## The accessory pitstop

On the streets and on social media alike, the traditional meets the evolving, with unique takes on styling. A lot of the 'younger' looks involve combining traditional prints and fabrics with non-traditional silhouettes. Consider the increasingly popular Ajrakh blazers and corsets. Well-loved slow fashion brands have been designing strappy short kurtas and colourful vests, seeing lines get sold out within weeks.

Other handlooms are popular as accessories. Fabric-covered bags and printed stoles have been around for longer, but products like ikat-print bucket hats and even printed shoes and sneakers have evolved out of this young interest in homegrown prints and fabrics.

A key driving factor behind interest in various Indian prints is the distinctiveness it offers."I like to buy what looks unique, and wear designs I have not seen everywhere. It is more expensive, but I like knowing I have something one-of-a-kind or at least rare," says Jeevan K, a 26-year-old who works in marketing.

Mixing textures and going for more flowy, breezy looks is a common route that Gen Z takes too. "I love the way Chanderi silk flows, so I like to add a shawl to most ethnic outfits. Of late, I have also seen Bandhani stoles in shops, and I love how vibrant the colours are," says Nimisha.

## How to source authentic handlooms

As a new generation encounters old crafts, navigating the world of handloom can be intimidating, particularly amid threats of digital printing and counterfeits. However, the community offers a simple solution. "Being humble to learn from generational knowledge is key," says Pavithra. This includes learning from families and communities, who both possess a trove of information. Connecting with the makers is key. "So many designs have a rich history — they have put food on the table for communities for decades."

Connecting with the makers and their stories in this way allows wearers to engage meaningfully with the culture that is the foundation for India's diversity of textiles, arts, and prints, she explains. The veteran handloom practitioner points to the numerous craft fairs, often organised by women's communities. "These are spaces where you get to see the amazing community and the artisans. You also meet, connect and learn," she says. While a lot of shopping happens online these days, handloom wearers also emphasise that touch and feel is ultimately the best method to test and authenticate pieces. GI tags might prove a helpful marker for some weaves like Kanchipuram silk, Muga silk, Uppada Jamdani sarees, to name a few, but reliable sellers and stores seem to be the more common approach for the average buyer.

## The saree and sneaker look

Indian prints and patterns are also popular with millennials; however, there are some differences in how this generation approaches them. "My younger cousins love wearing kurtas with baggy jeans. I prefer the more tried and tested short kurti, silver jhumkas combination for when I'm feeling like wearing ethnic wear. I am not that adventurous with the styles, but keep it interesting with different prints and colour combinations," says Dhruti S, an IT professional and self-described "elder millennial".

The saree and sneaker look has also drawn its fair share of both attention and ire. But most handloom practitioners champion the new draping styles and pairing choices for sarees, as they believe the garment itself inherently lends itself to such creativity.

For Sumana Mukherjee, a Bengaluru-based writer and editor, the restyling of the saree is a great sign. "Younger people love fabrics and clothes that drape freely. So unstarched cotton, Chanderi are great options. The trend of restyling is great because it represents a progression, which is very good for Indian crafts. Once younger people are introduced to unstitched fabric, there is no end to how they will be able to express themselves. The saree is the best blank canvas," she says.

Younger choices of sarees seem to lean towards vibrant contrasts. Last year and the year before, polka-dotted sarees became quite popular. We're also seeing the sarees expanding beyond the traditional border, and also more patchwork pieces," she says.

## What of the artisans?

Considering this growing interest in handlooms and regional textiles, and the seemingly endless potential for reinvention, what does this mean for the industry and for India's artisans?

The country is home to over 2.8 million handloom weavers, according to the latest Handloom Census (2019-20). They contribute nearly 15% of global textile production.

According to India Handmade Collective and Indus Diplomacy, India produces 95% of the world's handwoven fabric, and 72% of the sector's workforce is women.

For many artisans, the craft offers financial independence and a sustainable livelihood.

Digital platforms have played a major role in spotlighting the work of local artisans across India. Artisans specialising in Bandhani from Gujarat and Rajasthan, Ikat from Odisha, or Kalamkari from Andhra Pradesh are able to reach customers on the other side of the country.

"People working at the grassroots, at the community level and in non-profits are helping the artisans connect with the online market. They are working with the children of artisans, too, arousing their interest, educating them in using social media. This is helping bridge the gap between artisan and consumer, which is promising for the future of handloom," says Sumana.

The increased interest and exploration of a diversity of handlooms is positive. However, as the 'virality' of many looks and prints increases, there also comes the looming threat of mass production.

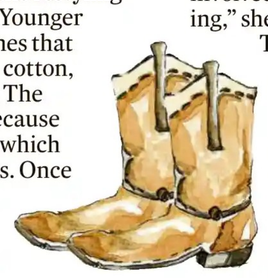
Take, for instance, an online retail giant, which reported a 20% growth in the handloom segment last year, claiming to boost artisan-led fashion. The platform advertises over 60 handloom-first brands, with over "20,000 styles and connecting 25,000 artisans to consumers." The same platform is ubiquitous on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube reels, marketing clothing under Rs 300, or even less.

"I used to look for the cheapest options, but over time, I noticed that they did not last too long," says Anagha G (21), studying UI/UX design.

"After speaking to others, I also learnt more about the differences between digitally printed clothes and real block prints. Now I save up to buy from reliable brands," she says. Anagha explains that she learnt to look for the 'imperfections', where designs and textures had slight variations — signs that they were made by human hands. "I also liked the idea that my piece would be the only one of its kind," she adds.

## Making conscious choices

For others, a shopping ethic evolved over time. "When I first started buying my own clothes, I could only afford retail, and would look for the cheapest options. Over time, I learnt more about fast fashion and began to make more conscious choices, but this was only possible once I started earning enough," says Dhruti. "Now I make sure I source from reliable brands, where artisans are empowered and even involved in decision-making and designing," she adds.



Thrifting is an option, but the availability of handloom pieces is fairly erratic. "It depends on what markets or stores you have access to. My friends in the Northeast and even Delhi find interesting and unique pieces very easily, but it is much harder to find such things thrifting here in Bengaluru," says Nimisha. "I am planning to raid my grandmother's saree collection for some pretty pieces. I have always admired her collection, and now I want to start wearing them too," she adds.

## Tag the celebrity

Akin to other fashion trends in India, a key driver is celebrity looks, particularly on international red carpets. While some stars like Vidya Balan and Rekha have built their own personal looks from handlooms, seeing younger actors donning Bandhani, Ikat and Chanderi on the global stage has invited renewed interest.

Seeing a Bandhani saree or an Ikat jacket at an award show also stirs up excitement on social media. Often, this is followed by increased interest on the part of wearers, supported by responsive design by brands.

"Marketing that highlights the potential of 'recreating' red carpet looks and replicating your favourite celebrities is very common on social media," says Shireen Thomas, a Bengaluru-based design student. "I like to go online, see what is currently popular, and then figure out how to put my own spin on it. I do not wear a lot of sarees, so I focus more on the prints and colours that are in trend each season. In the process, I have learnt about designs and printing techniques that I had never heard of before," she says.

Sumana cites the example of a saree worn by Kajol at a Durga Puja celebration. "She wore the Gamcha saree, traditionally viewed as more of a 'downmarket' style, and elevated this age-old, fairly local craft," she says. Additionally, the saree was not so expensive that it was inaccessible, she adds. "This inspiration tends to percolate down, with many brands drawing inspiration from these looks and trends."

# MIXED BAG

*'Mixed Bag' is your Sunday potpourri — an assortment of snappy articles, engaging ideas and snackable nibbles about this and that, from here and there. Dip in!*

## Nairobi's dogs dazzle at 'Pawchella'

Nairobi dog lovers showed off their four-legged friends in an array of quirky, colourful outfits recently as the Kenyan capital's annual dog show returned with the theme of "Pawchella".

From Mexican-style sombreros to East Africa's Maasai-inspired shukas and even coordinated owner-pet outfits, the fashion spectrum was as bold as it was adorable. Dubbed the Shaggy Dog Show, the annual event is organised by the Kenya Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (KSPCA) for pups rescued from abuse or the street.

"We get 6,000 calls a year for immediate, urgent help," KSPCA's chief Emma Ngugi told *AFP*, adding that the emergencies arise from car accidents, human cruelty or sickness. With the theme "Adopt, don't shop!", many of the rescued dogs stealing the spotlight in full glam are now rehabilitated and thriving in new homes, but Ngugi said there were still many at the centre in desperate condition.

A Chihuahua participates in the Pawchella Shaggy Dog Show in Nairobi. AFP

The show aims to raise funds for the NGO, which has been rescuing not just dogs but also cats, donkeys, and horses for over a century. KSPCA also advocates for pet vaccination, with every furry attendee at the show required to present a vaccination certificate.

Ngugi noted that rabies remains a serious threat in Kenya. To address the rising number of stray dogs without homes, KSPCA also champions neutering to help control the population.

Many at the show became instant stars, from a cane corso tipping the scales at over 45 kilograms (100 pounds) to a tiny chihuahua weighing just 1.8 kilograms. A three-year-old Caucasian shepherd won the "shaggiest" category, flaunting its massive grey coat as many festival-goers lined up to strike a pose alongside it. This is "a chance to come together and celebrate" as dog lovers, Ngugi said.

She noted that pet culture in Kenya had evolved over the decades, with dogs and other animals now treasured "not necessarily for work, but as companions" in a way that was not the case traditionally. "The majority of people now adopting, especially dogs and cats, are young African Kenyan families," Ngugi said.

**AFP**

## Dolphin delights and worries

A wild dolphin, nicknamed "Mimmo" by the local press, has become a regular visitor in the waters off Venice's St Mark's Square, captivating tourists but raising concerns about its safety amid heavy marine traffic.

Dolphins are rare visitors to the UNESCO World Heritage city's lagoon, though two were spotted in March 2021 during Covid restrictions that had reduced boat activity.

'Mimmo' swims in the San Marco Basin in Venice. REUTERS

Mimmo, believed to have entered the lagoon in late June, has been dodging the water buses, taxis, and gondolas in the busy St Mark's Basin area since last month, according to marine biologist Luca Mizzan, head of Venice's Natural History Museum.

Unusually, the dolphin remains near St Mark's even when it has fed and appears unfazed by the noise of the boats and crowds.

Experts are concerned that Mimmo could get injured by a boat propeller and are monitoring its movements, but are uncertain how to encourage the dolphin to leave the area, he said. The approach of winter, which normally drives away fish, may make the lagoon less attractive for Mimmo, Mizzan said. "This animal seems really sure of what it wants to do... It is perfectly capable of going out to sea, but even if we were to escort it, it could come back within a couple of hours."

**REUTERS**

**FEEDBACK**

*Like this story? Write to us at* **dhonsunday@deccanherald.co.in**

**ASTROSPEAK**

*Guruji Shrii Arnav*

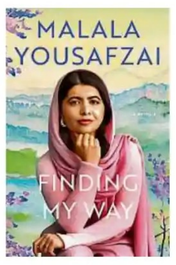
*Scan the QR code to read the* ***weekly horoscope***

**Is Malala Yousafzai now a child of privilege? Maybe, maybe not. What comes across is a formidable young woman who will not take no for an answer, writes Sheila Kumar**

# MALALA, minus the halo

Malala (in pink) poses with her mother, father and brother at the all-boys Swat Cadet College in Guli Bagh, Pakistan, during a visit. Swat Valley was where she was shot in the head by the Taliban in 2012. (AFP FILE PIC)

This autobiography reads like the coming-of-age memoir of just another girl filled with self-doubt, unsure of many things, trying to find her niche in a world far from her comfort zone. It just so happens that the subject and writer is Malala Yousafzai, who was shot by a gunman back in Pakistan when she was 15 years old, survived the attack, underwent a clutch of facial reconstruction surgeries, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014, and went on to become what the tabloids termed an 'international icon'.



**FINDING MY WAY**
**Malala Yousafzai**
Hachette,
pp 302, Rs 699

Finding My Way makes for a very interesting read, Malala's voice coming across to the reader as clear, honest, and even confiding. Which is either the way she is, or there has been some very artful writing indeed.

The book positions itself as speaking to those who know who Malala Yousafzai is, how she was airlifted from Mingora in Swat to Birmingham, which is where her parents, Ziauddin and Toor Pekai, now stay with Malala's two younger brothers, Khushal and Atal. Malala finished her high school in Birmingham and went to Oxford to read Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Lady Margaret Hall.

This is an account of her years at Oxford, first struggling to make friends, then struggling to stay abreast of her academic workload. Eventually, she balances both; we are taken on almost every step of the journey, and willy-nilly, the reader starts rooting for her. The book reveals vulnerability, is studded with self-deprecating humour, and a startling maturity too, as when she acknowledges that she needs to curate her life, how she speaks, what she wears, and who she meets. If I wanted to promote education and equality for girls and women in Pakistan, I had to be inoffensive in every way, she says pragmatically.

### Dodging many bullets

The Oxford years are breakout years in more ways than Malala envisaged. She gets to navigate her high-profile life, be just another teenager with crushes on suitable and unsuitable boys, scrapping constantly with her mother, going to dance parties, all the while keeping that halo untarnished, because any blowback would affect her fundraising efforts. Everything Malala does, she does with her security detail in tow; she is both rueful and pragmatic about her shadows.

I am an inspiration, a hero, an activist, she says at one point, but also a wallflower, a punchbag, a pay cheque. And yes, she knows the bullets she dodged: marriage in her early teens, several children before she turned 20, a life spent behind the wall of her husband's house. But when asked about the bullets that she couldn't dodge, she finds it's no easy exchange. There was that weeklong coma, the multiple surgeries, the long recuperation, and the battle with PTSD. With the Taliban periodically renewing their pledge to kill her, she remains a target.

Time and again, she shows the reader glimpses of her determination. At one point, she states, "Too often in my home country, women's bodies are used to measure the strength of our religious beliefs and national identity. Challenge the social norms created and enforced by men, and you disgrace your family and community."

When she won the Nobel, she used the money to purchase land in Shangla, a remote cluster of villages in the mountains, and build a school there. It is one of the highs in Malala's life when she gets to visit the school and interact with the vivacious girls studying there.

There are nods to India, as when she reminisces about styling her hair in the bathroom mirror at Mingora, imagining herself in a Bollywood movie with Shah Rukh Khan. Elsewhere, she talks of having watched Indian soap operas and having crushes on Bollywood stars.

There is also a love story here, Malala meeting the love of her life, Asser Malik, discreetly dating him for years, and eventually marrying him.

She was forced to grow up too soon, but this account reveals the child she is at heart. The account turns dark, though, when Malala reflects on the inroads the Taliban have made when they reclaimed Afghanistan.

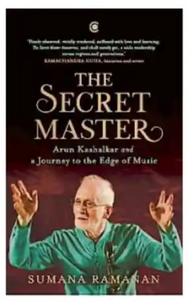
The book throws one question at the reader: Is Malala Yousafzai now a child of privilege? The reader will have to read of her many surgeries, all the vicious threats and vile trolling she faces from hardline patriarchal elements, how she goes into panic attack mode when repressed memories of the attack in the school bus surface, all the doubts, fears, stoic acceptance and ceaseless striving to raise funds and continue being an education activist, and decide for themselves.

What does come through, clear as the crystal streams of the Swat valley, is that this is one formidable young woman who has her eyes firmly fixed on her purpose in life, who has come to terms with all she has to give up to achieve that purpose, and who just will not take no for an answer.

# A musical detour

The Secret Master: Arun Kashalkar & a Journey to the Edge of Music is an expansive voyage to a unique musical universe. Author Sumana Ramanan crafts a living, breathing story of the sonic landscape created by her Guru, Pandit Arun Kashalkar. A serendipitous invitation to his concert, and its enthralling effect, unlocked a cabinet of curiosities and thus began a journey. The book is composed of three strands: a biography of Arun Kashalkar, a memoir of Sumana's immersive musical experience, and the narrative of music.

The author draws from the tradition of literary non-fiction. To quote the author: "I wanted to write a gripping true-life story about artistic idealism and striving in a hidden world of music. Whatever techniques I combined, I finally wanted the heart of the book to have a strong emotional charge". And the book draws you in with its "emotional charge" into that world of music. The author traces both the life and artistic endeavours of Panditji from a small town in Maharashtra to his momentous shift to Mumbai. She documents his musical journey under the aegis of his father, N D Kashalkar, along with Gurus like Gajananbuwa Joshi, Ram Marathe and Babanrao Haldankar, his approach to Khayal gayaki and the creation of his own musical signature. Probably the most evocative segments of the book are the descriptions of the author attending music classes held in the Guru's residence. She describes how raga became a vital force in the class and how every note sparked a conversation. The music was intensely personal as well as collective, with the Guru's wife serving home-cooked snacks.



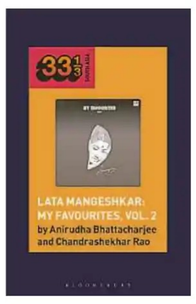
The discourse broadens to deep discussions about the Hindustani music tradition, the decline of the royal courts, the displacement of artists, inter-religion and inter-caste dynamics between artists, and the lyrics and language of compositions. Here, the author's journalistic prowess is evident as she gives us deep insights into this rich world. The narrative also reflects the economics and politics, the biases and prejudices of mainstream concert culture, the counter to which is provided by platforms still in the service of the Arts, away from market variables and algorithms. It concludes with an honest human affirmation: "Arun had an idea of where he stood. He knew that his musical quest had not intersected with worldly success... He was more interested in the quality of a singer's relationship to his art..." This thought is the power and poise of this story. These stories must be told to stir our collective cultural consciousness.

**Sadhana Rao**

# Tribute to an icon

Bloomsbury Publications' 33 1/3 is an ambitious series of short books about music, focusing on individual albums by artists ranging from James Brown to Celine Dion and from J Dilla to Neutral Milk Hotel. The series, currently consisting of over 200 books, strives to elucidate world music history.

The entry for Bollywood music, 'Lata Mangeshkar: My Favourites Vol 2', is written by musicologists and music historians Aniruddha Bhattacharjee and Dr Chandrashekhar Rao. The featured album is an apt choice, since Lata's oeuvre touched some of the most important luminaries of Bollywood. The album comprises 50 hand-picked songs spanning four decades, interspersed with brief commentary by Lata herself. The book itself is a heady mix of music and film history, musicology, and music appreciation. It is enjoyable and instructive at the same time.



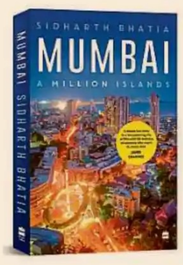
The book is organised into 11 categories based on the composer of the song. This is an interesting choice, and a welcome deviation from typical chronological arrangements. Each category strings together stylistically similar composers and delves into the nuances of each song. The analysis of each song is adorned with deeply insightful critique, historical perspective, technique, anecdotes and informed opinion. The typical Hindi song is a unique blend of Indian melodic base and Western orchestration. This makes the musicological discussion very interesting. The narrative is peppered with anecdotes, gleaned from various sources as well as personal memories and conversations. The image of S D Burman landing up at the producer's home at 5 am to announce that he has composed a winning melody for *Jyoti*, or of Vasant Desai's discovery of Pt Shivkumar Sharma for *Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baje*, as narrated by family members, lends a personal touch and a degree of warmth to these larger-than-life figures. Despite the complexity of the content, the writing style is conversational and easy to read and captures the rich history of Hindi film music through the lens of a single album. It is also a wonderful tribute to Lata Mangeshkar.

**Chetan Vinchhi**

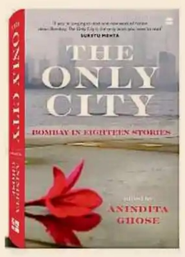
## MOOD BOARD

A slew of recent releases has swung the spotlight squarely back onto the city that supposedly never sleeps — Mumbai. Here are three worth your time:

**Mumbai: A Million Islands (HarperCollins) by Sidharth Bhatia:**
This promises to be a renewed look at a city that is always being transformed. Since the East India Company merged seven islands into Bombay (now Mumbai), change has been constant, but now it is used as a weapon for displacement, disguised as development. What is vanishing is not just space, but memory, history and the very fabric of a living city.



**The Only City (Fourth Estate) edited by Anindita Ghose:**
This is a collection of 18 new pieces of short fiction that capture the pulse of this city of stories. Featuring some of the best names in Indian fiction — both emerging and established — this anthology frames the city through a range of vantage points, where every character carries a critical Bombay fragment.



**Perfect Storm (Penguin) by Prabhakar Aloka & Nikhil Ravi:**
On November 26, 2008, 10 men slipped silently into Mumbai by sea. Over the next 60 hours, they unleashed a storm of violence that brought India's financial capital to its knees. The true story of this attack begins decades earlier, spans multiple continents, and enmeshes a diverse array of characters. This is a story that has never been told in full. Until now.

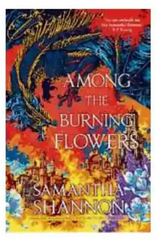
**Mood Board** *is a column that presents thematic lists of books on hot-button topics.*

# A world that's both lyrical and brutal

**This is a superb prequel in which Shannon weaves a tale of resilience, betrayal, and tragic love that sets the stage for the epic saga to come, writes Ankita Victor**

The story unfolds in Yscalin, a kingdom with molten lava flowing through it, sleeping dragons and secrets.

Among the Burning Flowers is a haunting and beautifully crafted prequel to The Priory of the Orange Tree, set in the politically volatile kingdom of Yscalin. As ancient dragons begin to stir from centuries of slumber, the novella follows three characters — Marosa Vetalda, a princess imprisoned by her father; Aubrecht Lievelyn, a prince burdened by duty and love; and Estina Melaugo, a hardened dragon hunter navigating a world on the edge of collapse. With the great wyrm Fýredel awakening and the Draconic Army poised to rise again, Shannon weaves a tale of resilience, betrayal, and tragic love that sets the stage for the epic saga to come. Rich in atmosphere and emotional depth, this novella paves the way for the opening of The Priory of the Orange Tree.



**AMONG THE BURNING FLOWERS**
**Samantha Shannon**
Bloomsbury,
pp 260, Rs 599

The story unfolds in Yscalin, a kingdom with molten lava flowing through it, ancient mines, and secrets. It is here that Marosa lives as a prisoner in her own palace, shackled by the cold indifference of her father, King Sigoso III, and waiting to marry her betrothed, Aubrecht, the Red Prince of Mentendon, to finally escape her suffocating prison. Her quiet rebellion and longing for freedom form the emotional backbone of the story. Shannon portrays the young Marosa with exquisite sensitivity, capturing the tension between duty and desire, between hope and despair. Aubrecht is a man trying to build a better world while navigating the impossible politics of his time. His love for Marosa is tender and restrained, and their relationship — conducted largely through letters and internal musings — is a masterclass in romantic tension and offers deeper insight into the political and personal stakes that ripple through The Priory of the Orange Tree.

In stark contrast to the royal court is Estina, whose life is one of survival, violence, and hard-earned freedom. Her journey offers a visceral counterpoint to the palace intrigue of Yscalin and adds texture and tension to the narrative. Her relationship with Liyat, a fellow hunter, is tender and understated, grounding her arc in emotional truth.

The true terror of the novella lies in the awakening of Fýredel, the great wyrm whose emergence signals the beginning of the end. Shannon's depiction of Fýredel's rise is cinematic and chilling. The eruption of wyverns from Mount Fruma, the skies darkened by wings, and the lavender fields set ablaze — all are rendered in prose that sings and scorches. The horror is not just in the dragons themselves, but in the betrayal that enables them. King Sigoso's descent into madness and his alliance with Fýredel is a masterstroke of tragic storytelling, echoing great betrayals of myth.

Shannon's world-building is, as always, impeccable. From the warm streets of Cárscaro to the sulfurous depths of the dragon caves, every location feels lived-in and layered. The political and religious structures of Yscalin are intricately drawn, revealing how faith can be weaponised and how power can corrupt. What makes Among the Burning Flowers truly exceptional is its emotional resonance. Shannon doesn't just tell a story — she invites readers to feel it. The grief, the longing, the quiet acts of defiance — all are rendered with a poet's touch. The novella's brevity only enhances its impact; every scene, every line, feels purposeful and poignant.

In Among the Burning Flowers, Samantha Shannon returns to the world of the Roots of Chaos with a novella that is as devastating as it is dazzling. For fans of The Priory of the Orange Tree, this novella is essential reading. It doesn't merely expand the lore — it lays the foundation of it, offering a tragic and tender portrait of a world on the brink of annihilation. This prequel deepens the character arcs and sets the stage for the epic that follows. For newcomers, it offers a compelling entry point into Shannon's world — a story that stands on its own while hinting at greater things to come. With fire-breathing dragons stirring from their ancient slumber and political tensions simmering beneath memories of sunlit lavender fields, waterfalls and ephemeral joys, Shannon crafts a tale that is both intimate and epic, lyrical and brutal, making this a must-read.

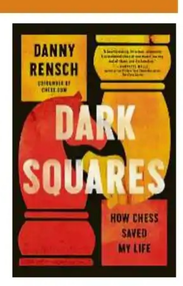
## READ OF THE WEEK

Born into the Church of Immortal Consciousness, Danny Rensch spent his childhood navigating the isolated confines of a cult. Despite psychological manipulation, physical abuse, and neglect, he persevered. An international chess master and world-class commentator, Rensch's remarkable journey led him to be the face of Chess.com, one of the largest online gaming platforms in the world.

With unflinching honesty, Rensch recounts his life, starting from the moment he discovered chess in the summer of 1995, all the way up to being at the centre of the most explosive cheating scandal in chess history.

Mentored by an alcoholic Russian chess master, he found solace alongside suffering in his obsession with an ancient game, and chess became his only escape. Rensch rose through the chess ranks until a medical emergency nearly took him out of the game forever. And it almost did, until Chess.com came along. Deeply heartfelt, keenly reflective, and haunting, Dark Squares is the never-before-told story of Danny Rensch's resilience, survival, and his enduring love for the game that saved him.

Danny Rensch is an international chess master, world-renowned chess broadcaster and commentator, and Chief Chess Officer for Chess.com. Rensch was a seven-time all-American chess player and a national scholastic chess champion on multiple occasions.



**The patriarchy would have us believe that women are their own worst enemies. But look carefully, and you can see women pulling each other into the spotlight, sharing successes and stories, observes Arundhati Ghosh**

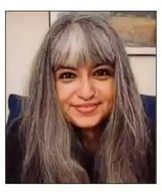
TIES AND KNOTS

In their triumph, the Indian women's team acknowledged and made space for other women – their team mates, predecessors, and even their adversaries. (FILE PIC/PTI)

# When women bat for each other

As India celebrates victory at the Women's ODI World Cup and swoons over the up-until-now ignored team of dazzling sportswomen, I observe how women rejoice when they win. Asked about her fantastic performance in the semi-finals against Australia, Jemimah Rodrigues thanked each person by name from the team who supported her through her anxious state during the tournament and in the match leading up to her century. After receiving the trophy, Captain Harmanpreet Kaur invited seniors Jhulan Goswami, Anjum Chopra and Mithali Raj – who had come very close to winning it in 2005 and 2017 – to share the honour of holding it up. Among videos of jubilant dancing that filled social media, I found our team embracing with great affection their opponents, those they beat, the players from South Africa. In all their actions I witness them in their triumph remembering, acknowledging and making space for other women – their team mates, their predecessors, and even their adversaries.

This taking a step back from the focus of the glory and pulling others into light is rare.



What kind of relationships do women form with other women when they work, play, and create together to make this possible? It benefits patriarchy to have us believe that women are women's worst enemies. This is a recruitment strategy for foot soldiers! Manipulating some women by bestowing scraps of power to use for their own benefit and control of others; or compelling them to compete for paltry resources like the attention of men or a seat at their table inculcate narratives that support this theory. The contentious saas-bahu relationship is caricatured into serials running for decades, invisibilising the deep generational trauma women endure at the heart of the complex institution of marriage. It also erases stories of kinship between women that are often vital for their very survival in families steeped in deeply casteist, patriarchal and heteronormative injustices. Enough is whispered of grandmothers financing the flight of girls to study and work; aunts enabling inter-caste, inter-faith marriages; and daughters-in-law caring for abandoned mother-in-laws when sons escape to more convenient wives and lives. But these are overlooked, lest women discover how radically threatening our connections can be for patriarchy.

## Forging female friendships

Ma told me of the practice of 'shoi patano', a ritual of deliberate 'forging of friendship', which used to be common among women in Bengal in the late 19th and early 20th century. They would affectionately call each other by names of flowers, plants and everyday objects that were metaphors for their relationship. They nurtured a private world with shared laughter, coded language, and handwritten letters building unwavering trust of foremost confidantes. This intimacy created a crucial sanctuary - a safe space within a deeply misogynistic and restrictive patriarchal society. Ma shared that when one shoi got married leaving for a faraway village, the other grieved like a forlorn lover. In some cases they would continue to write to each other. Often a shoi was the sole keeper of all one's secret desires and forbidden flights.

This visceral bond much like today's 'chosen family' challenged the control of natal and marital families. It also contested the assumed hierarchy of spousal couples as the most intimate of relationships in heteronormative worlds thus queering the pitch.

I am fortunate to have experienced closely how female camaraderie draws others into luminescence. During the Anti-CAA protests that stormed the country a few years ago, while Delhi had Shaheen Bagh, Mumbai its Azad Maidan – in Bangalore we mobilised Bilal Bagh. Hundreds of women from across class and community squeezed in, under one shamiana, drawing posters, singing songs and minding each other's children. Women who had never shouted a slogan in their lives raised fists against the politics of hate. Serendipitous camaraderie tentatively evolved into fledgling friendships.

While the pandemic halted the resistance, many of us reconnected and formed a motley gang of sisters. Declaring a certain crossroad Aman Dweepa, our island of peace, we continue to meet regularly at homes, parks and streets to work for a more inclusive society as well as stand by each other. There are no leaders or mobilisers in this group, only a practice of debate, building consensus and shared responsibilities. And since we know well the vulnerability of individual battles and monstrosity of powers that be, the splendour of every achievement is shared.

The spotlight on women is rare; the price exorbitant; the impact – uncertain. Therefore when one has it, we share. Perhaps a profound sense of marginality in the face of society's oppression makes women pull each other into the ambit of illumination. It is recognition of shared histories of omission. These days I notice more and more women across age and class travelling, laughing, eating and hanging together, and as I marvel at the resilience of sisterhood I imagine a world where everyone stands in the sun.

FEEDBACK
Have something to say? Send your feedback and suggestions to arufeedback @gmail.com

*(This column navigates the various worlds of entangled relationships attempting to celebrate, cope with, and reimagine the meanings of our connections. The author is a writer, cultural practitioner, social activist, and traveller. 'All Our Loves: Journeys with Polyamory in India' is her first book in English, published by Aleph in 2025.)*

# Against ALL ODDS

**The T20 World Cup for the Blind has helped Indian women prove that vision doesn't always come from the eyes, writes L Subramani**

A ball rattles across the patchy ground behind the Ranga Rao Memorial School for the Differently Abled in Mysuru. A dozen girls face the batter, anticipation rising as their voices merge. They are blind, yet they move with practiced precision: a crack, a shuffle, then silence.

Among them stands Deepika TC, a thin girl from Tumakuru whose smile often arrives before her words. She came to the school not to play cricket but to "learn to live with blindness," as her parents said. Soon, that goal gave way to cricket's unexpected pull. Her father, Chikkathimappa, a farmer, pressed her hand and whispered, "Be brave." At first, bravery meant walking across the dormitory without bumping into benches. Later, it meant raising a bat and listening for the rattle.

"I always dreamt of playing cricket," she says, laughing. "I never knew blind cricket was played at national or international levels."

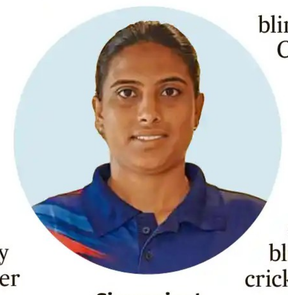
"Forget blind women," says Shika Shetty, manager of India's blind women's team. "Even sighted women like me hear, 'Why should women play sports?'"

She laughs, but the humour is tired.

"Parents and teachers hesitated to let these girls out. They only expected studying and jobs. We explained that sports builds confidence and independence. Eventually, they saw the change."

## Of grit and determination

Now, Shika's girls have participated in the first Women's T20 Cricket World Cup for the Blind, hosted by India (November 11 to November 23). When Deepika learnt she would captain India, she simply adjusted her scarf, smiled, and asked about practice. "The only challenge is communication. We use English and Hindi," she says.



Simranjeet Kaur

Deepika TC

Simu Das

Meanwhile, in another corner of the ground, Simu Das from Guwahati waits for her turn to bat. "Before cricket, my life was pathetic," she says. "My parents are poor," she adds. After she took to cricket, she has been able to send home her earnings from playing—enough for her parents to buy a small house.

A similar story belongs to Simranjeet Kaur of Kota, Rajasthan, who discovered cricket in her teens. "Before cricket, I never had the courage to step out. Now I travel to play. My papa (Gurpal Singh), a kabaddi player, encouraged me."

Her story echoes those of blind women from across seven states. They have won gold at the 2023 IBSA World Games in Birmingham, beating Australia, before their tryst at the World Cup.

Following the 2017 men's blind T20 World Cup, Samarthanam and the Cricket Association for the Blind in India (CABI) began building a structure for blind women's cricket—district, state, and national. Their first international match was against Nepal in 2019.

"Hosting the first Blind Women's World Cup has been our dream," says Dr Mahantesh G Kivadasannavar, CABI Chairman and Samarthanam Founder. The tournament includes teams from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Australia, the United States, and Pakistan, apart from India.

The Indian team was thrilled to receive a video message from their role model and part of the winning Indian women's cricket team at the recent World Cup, Jemimah Rodrigues, wishing them success.

As the women train, they talk of parents and coaches, of the journeys from distant towns, of friends who said, "You cannot do this," and of those who insisted, "You must try."

For Deepika, Simu, Simran, and the entire Indian team, this is not only about cricket but about showing that vision does not always come from the eyes—and that courage is sometimes heard in the rattle of a ball rolling towards the boundary.

## Travel

**Charukesi Ramadurai visits the German capital and notes that while the city has not forgotten its yesterdays, it hasn't allowed them to shape its tomorrows**

# Presence of the past in Berlin

In Berlin, the past is never far away. Not surprising really, since the past – especially the last century – has not been very kind to this glorious city. Whether it is the Holocaust that divided the people into us and them, or the infamous Wall that continued on the same theme under a different name, Berlin is still coming to terms with the many injustices it has been a silent witness to.

When I step out of my hotel at Potsdamer Platz on a bright morning, I know I am going on a walk to peek into this very past. For, my guide Tatjana Rossa herself grew up in East Germany, with her parents who were deeply committed to the socialist cause in the GDR, or German Democratic Republic, as East Germany was then called. This year marks the 35th anniversary of the Reunification, eleven months after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and I am keen to know more about the sociopolitical fault lines that caused the split in the first place, and any physical remains that still exist. The latter – it's easy. Just a ten-minute walk from the Lulu Guldsmeden hotel leads us to Potsdamer Platz, the prime example of Berlin's reinvention after the fall of the wall.

35TH ANNIVERSARY OF REUNIFICATION

## Sights of the city

On the way, I cross the Neue Nationalgalerie (the new National Gallery), where I make a quick detour to take in the temporary exhibition on Yoko Ono's work around the theme of peace, titled 'Dream Together.' Fitting for Berlin, I think, as I walk around the framed collection of simple but powerful newspaper ads Ono and Lennon had taken out in the 1960s to protest the Vietnam War.

Further along the way, I stop to admire the splendid glass dome of the landmark building known as Center Potsdamer Platz (until a couple of years ago, called Sony Center), where kids are playing around the central fountains and officegoers in formal suits are grabbing a quick mid-morning coffee. Then there is the Boulevard of the Stars, which marks 120 years of the German film industry, commemorating its biggest actors and directors with a star, complete with its own red carpet.

Holocaust Memorial, a grim reminder of unspeakable horrors.

From where I'm standing, I am surrounded by gleaming skyscrapers and tony cafés all around. And it is difficult to imagine that not too long ago, this was a desolate no-man's land. Under my feet, I can feel a row of cobblestones marking the path of the wall, and up ahead, a showcase of photographs and information about its history, with small sections of the original bullet-marked wall preserved for posterity.

Then there are those who lived through it all, and still carry the scars from those times. The exhibits tell a heartbreaking story of families getting sundered and lives getting shattered overnight. I have tears in my eyes as I read about a mother being shot after trying to escape with her child. When I look up, I see a similar emotion on Tatjana's face. "It doesn't get any easier after all these years," she says. There is another remaining length of the wall along the Spree River, but this has transformed into a symbol of peace. This 1.3-km stretch of wall murals and authorised graffiti, known as the East Side Gallery, has provided much-needed space for artists from all over the world to express their discontent against fascism and war.

'Fraternal Kiss', an iconic mural.

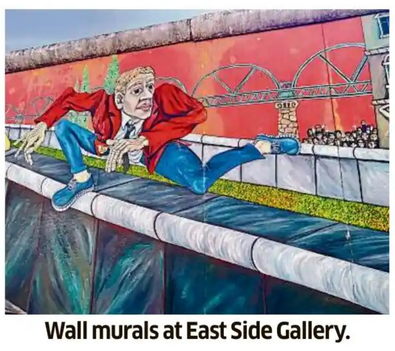
## Remembrance of things past

Among the many stunning murals is the famous "Fraternal Kiss" by artist Dmitri Vrubel, which depicts Brezhnev and Honecker (the former leaders of the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic respectively) locked in a socialist embrace. Cheekily titled 'My God, Help Me to Survive this Deadly Love', this mural is as playful as it is provocative and rebellious – a tone reflected in most of the artworks on this slice of the wall. And then is the graffiti scrawled by countless other hopefuls all over, expressed as cries against petty divisiveness and calls for unity.

## Horrors of the Holocaust

There is another kind of remembrance that the Holocaust Memorial – also called the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe – forces upon visitors. Located close to the iconic Brandenburg Gate with its grandiose statues up top, this memorial is a striking contrast with its straight rows of 2710 grey, squat blocks. The starkness is intentional, says Tatjana. But I still wonder about the difference in their heights. It is only when I walk in the narrow space between the columns that I understand the significance: it becomes disorienting and daunting so quickly that I get a fleeting idea of the desperation felt by those trapped by the Holocaust. I can get out when I want, but thousands had no escape.

All this is not to suggest that Berlin is one big gloomy mess. On the contrary, the warm day has brought locals out in full force, walking, drinking and dancing in the numerous parks and plazas scattered across the city. I get a glimpse of this on an afternoon boat ride on the Spree and at Tiergarten Park later in the evening. And at the Berlin Global exhibition at the newly opened Humboldt Forum museum complex, I get a better sense of the city's youthful, urban vibe and its place in the larger world. And I also get a sense that Berlin is not forgetting its past, but also not allowing it to shape the future.



Wall murals at East Side Gallery.

Modern vibes at Potsdamer Centre.

Berliners out and about on a warm day. (PHOTOS BY AUTHOR)

# The art of MINDFUL INDULGENCE

**Have we veered away from traditional ways of making festive treats at home? While the intention is to pick healthy goodies, are we giving ingredient labels a good look? Ranjini Rao gives some pointers on future-forward celebrations**

A comedian friend recently shared her thoughts about the Deepavali snack makeovers. Chakli losing its crunchy edge in the air fryer, oats added for fibre in laddoos, sugar-free barfi stealing the joy of living, vegan gulab jamoons that warrant the disdain of even the Gods, she lamented about several fads.

This got me thinking about how we've slowly, yet surely, veered away from traditional methods of preparing festive delicacies at home. Our focus tends to be on all the supermarket aisles filled with choices and the complicated, sometimes convoluted ways in

THE GREEN THEORY

which ingredient lists are marked on the labels. The reason we pick sweet treats that have jaggery rather than sugar, savoury snacks that scream "baked, not fried," or "no palm oil," is mostly because we wish to make healthier choices — but are they? Further, online delivery apps have several markdowns that are enticing, making it convenient to get festive goodies delivered at home — but have you looked at the "best by" dates on these packets? In our quest to eat right, we're often making the wrong calls.

Making small batches of snacks at home helps with portion control.

## The way we celebrated

I was pleasantly surprised by a friend's Deepavali hamper, which was so thoughtfully put together. It was made to order by a home chef, packed in eco-friendly packaging, presented on a steel plate. This took me back to festive days at home, when my mom would have our family caterer over for a couple of days, and they'd spend hours prepping doughs and syrups to make chakli and kodbale, om pudi and muchchore, rava and besan laddoos, Mysore pak and coconut barfis, and fill up old, large dalda dabbas. This would be apportioned and distributed to friends and family, in re-usable bowls procured from the steel paathre seller through barter: vessels in exchange for old clothes. The behind-the-scenes work was fascinating for me, as I witnessed her wash the grains and sun-dry them on the terrace, before taking them to the mill to make flour mixes. Most of the grains were sourced from either the neighbours' farms on the outskirts of Bengaluru, or the ration shop. The dry fruits, nuts and seeds were from the kirana shop around the corner, except

the cashews, which came from our own garden.

The sugar would be melted and strained through a fine muslin cloth, where a ball of impurities would clot and we'd fight over who would get to eat it. The oil, sourced from a local pressery, would be used just once, then rubbed and mixed into the soil from the garden. There was a lot of physical activity involved in the whole festive affair, leaving us tired and happy to be sugar-high.

*(Ranjini is a communications professor, author, and podcaster, straddling many other worlds, in Bengaluru. She's passionate about urban farming and sustainable living, and can mostly be found cooking and baking in her little kitchen, where, surrounded by heirloom coffee kettles and mismatched tea cups, she finds her chi.)*

## Sustainable festivities

- **Portion control** with home-made goodies is a better way to watch how we consume what we do, rather than bingeing on store-bought snacks. Making small batches of savouries (pick a lighter option like corn flakes chiwda over entirely deep-fried mixtures) and sweets (coconut barfi with sugar is perfectly okay, as long as you're not going gluttonous).
- **Sourcing ingredients** from local farms and stores helps keep you closer to the quality check line while also boosting local economy.
- **Prepping ingredients** ahead of time is a great way to set the tone for festive fervour among young ones, while also passing on skills that would otherwise be lost to zip-locked packages on store shelves.
- **Sharing home-made treats** with the community is also an enabler of future-forward food practice because it promotes cohesion and inclusion, and also encourages cultural conservation, reciprocity and resilience.
- **Refraining from made-over versions** of traditional foods helps us get closer to our roots and truly experience the stuff that nostalgia is made out to be, on social media. It's a great way to find connection and meaning within the framework of ancient practices that urban living is making harder to hold on to.

Buy ingredients locally so you can check for quality.

## Here's a traditional recipe for Mysore Pak:

**Ingredients:**

- 1 cup kadale hittu/ chickpeas flour
- 1 tablespoon ghee for greasing plate/ tray
- 1.5 cups sugar
- ½ cup water
- 1.5 cups ghee

**Method:**

- Sieve the kadale hittu/ chickpea flour and keep it aside- Grease a thick steel plate or tray with ghee, set aside.
- In a large, thick-bottomed pan, take sugar and water
- On a low flame, boil it until it comes to a rolling boil + 5 minutes. Add the ghee into the hot sugar syrup, stir well.
- Add the kadale hittu/ chickpea flour slowly, keep stirring to avoid lumps.

- Once the ghee separates to the sides of the pan, and you see the mixture forming bubbles, pour it on the greased plate/ tray, and allow it to set and cool down.
- Cut into squares and store in airtight container for upto a week.

WHAT'S COOKING

## Cool as a KOKUM!

Kokum (*Garcinia indica)* grows in the Western Ghats region and is used in a wide variety of dishes. The fruit has a tangy flavour to it, making it a good choice for dishes that need the element of sourness. Kokum is used in many forms – fresh, dried and made into a powder – as an oily extract, or juiced and stored as concentrate/syrup. It is known to have antioxidant properties, aids digestion and boosts metabolism.

The red fruit is used in many recipes, the most popular and easily recognisable one being solkadhi, a definite presence on most Maharashtrian and Goan platters. Solkadhi uses an extract of soaked kokum in a concoction of coconut milk, green chilli, ginger, garlic, cumin seeds, a pinch of sugar and salt. It is used as an after-meal drink. The spices you add depends on your preferences but this drink doesn't use butter milk or besan, often used in other kadhis.

Then, there's kokum saaru or rasam, where you soak kokum in warm water and use its juice in place of tomato or tamarind. Enjoy it with rice or even as a drink on a winter's day. Kokum can also be used as an additive for curries where you need tanginess or for dal preparations.

Solkadhi, a popular drink.

You can use fresh ripe kokum to make a cooling juice – enhance flavours by adding sugar/ jaggery and a dash of crushed cardamom.

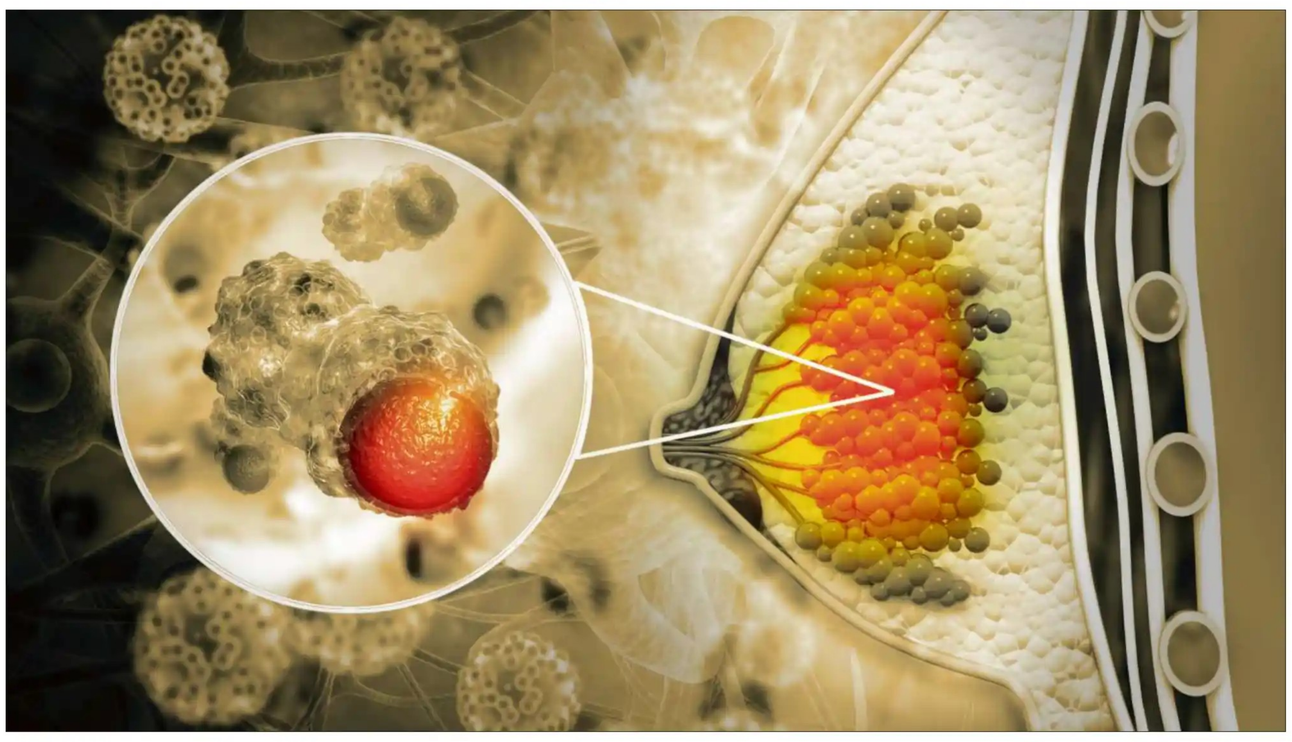
Want a sweet-sour dip or chutney to go with samosas or sandwiches? Kokum chutney could just be the answer – soak kokum for three to four hours, drain, and grind it into a paste. You can add some jaggery, cumin, salt and green chillies or pepper – a flavour bomb is ready!

If you are looking to buy kokum, you can source the fruit from organic vegetable stores or look for Mangaluru stores/stores that sell food products from the Konkan region. You could also buy dry kokum, kokum juice or powder online.

*(***What's Cooking** *shines the spotlight on a single ingredient, its nutritional qualities and the ways in which you can use it.)*



**Obesity doesn't just raise the risk of developing breast cancer but also worsens survival outcomes. Women over forty need to get regular annual screenings, advises Dr Shabber Zaveri**



# Keep an eye on your BMI

Obesity has become one of the most pressing health challenges of modern times, and its connection with breast cancer, especially in postmenopausal women, is both significant and alarming. While several factors contribute to breast cancer, excess body weight has emerged as one of the most preventable risk factors.

### Understanding the risk

Multiple studies have shown that postmenopausal women who are obese face a 26 per cent higher risk of developing breast cancer compared to those with a healthy body weight. The relative risk ratio, according to pooled analyses, ranges from 1.08 to 1.41, and the longer a person remains obese, the higher their chances of developing breast cancer.

In contrast, premenopausal women may have a neutral or slightly lower risk associated with obesity, though the evidence is still evolving. The negative impact of obesity becomes more evident after menopause, particularly in women whose breast cancers are hormone receptor-positive (ER/PR-positive), meaning the tumour grows in response to estrogen and progesterone.

Obesity doesn't just raise the risk of developing breast cancer; it also worsens survival outcomes. Research shows that obesity can increase the likelihood of recurrence and mortality by 35–40 per cent, especially in hormone receptor-positive cases.

### Why does obesity raise the risk?

The connection between obesity and breast cancer is mediated by several biological pathways:

### Chronic inflammation

In obesity, adipose tissue becomes hypertrophied and dysfunctional, which can lead to chronic, low-grade inflammation. This initiates the release of inflammatory mediators known as cytokines that can damage DNA, stimulate the development of new blood vessels for tumors, and enable cancer cells to evade the immune system.

### Hormonal changes

With menopause, the ovaries stop producing estrogen, and body fat becomes the primary source of estrogen. Thus, greater body fat means higher circulating levels of estrogen, which is the fuel for hormone receptor-positive breast cancer.

### Insulin and metabolic issues

Obesity is often associated with insulin resistance and hyperinsulinemia, which drives elevated levels of insulin-like growth factors (IGF). These factors stimulate cell proliferation and have the potential to promote breast cancer development.

### Difficulties in early detection

In the context of obesity, it can be very difficult to diagnose breast cancer early. In obese women, the breast lump can be hidden in the breast fatty tissue resulting in a delay in diagnosis, meaning that many obese postmenopausal women will be diagnosed at stage 3 or 4 when the breast cancer has metastasized to the bones, lungs, or brain.

### Importance of screening

Early detection is critical for survival. Unfortunately, India's screening rates remain low, and the majority of women, even in urban settings, delay screening due to fear and misconceptions about breast cancer, such as the belief that "breast cancer always hurts." In fact, 99 out of 100 breast cancers do not hurt early on.

According to current guidelines, all women over the age of 40 should have yearly breast screening which consists of a mammogram and a breast ultrasound. Women who cannot lose weight because of other medical conditions such as arthritis or heart disease should still have yearly breast imaging to detect cancer early.

*(The author is chairman, HOD and consultant - surgical oncology & robotic surgery at a Bengaluru hospital.)*

## Steps for prevention

While not every risk factor is something we can change—whether it is age, heredity, or another health issue—obesity is modifiable. Here are some practical steps to lower risk:

- **Maintain a healthy weight:** Keep your Body Mass Index (BMI) under 25.
- **Get regular exercise:** Aim to add at least 180 minutes of exercise per week with activities such as brisk walking, cycling, or swimming. This activity burns calories and improves hormone regulation.
- **Eat wisely:** Concentrate on a balanced diet which consists of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Refrain from sugar, processed foods, and saturated fats.
- **Limit alcohol and stop smoking:** Both are carcinogens and increase risk.
- **Consider bariatric surgery:** If you are severely obese and unable to lose weight using traditional means, weight loss surgery can significantly lower your long-term risk.

## Counting sheep?

Sleep is one of the most underrated factors that aids your well-being. A good night's sleep includes these stages: light sleep when your body and brain just start to relax, the second stage where your body temperature, heart rate and breathing slow down, the third stage of deep sleep which is restorative, giving your body time to repair. The most important aspect of sleep is REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, which is when most of your dreams occur and your brain activity increases. This sleep helps memory and learning as well. The REM cycle happens after your body has gone through each stage of non-REM sleep.

How do you hack your way to better sleep? Here are a few tips:

- Imagine or recall a memory of something that's serene. It could just be looking at a beautiful waterfall, sitting by the sea on a holiday or any favourite setting or memory — remember or visualise every detail, from the sounds to the colours of the setting and patterns. This gives you an immersive experience and you may finding yourself nodding off.

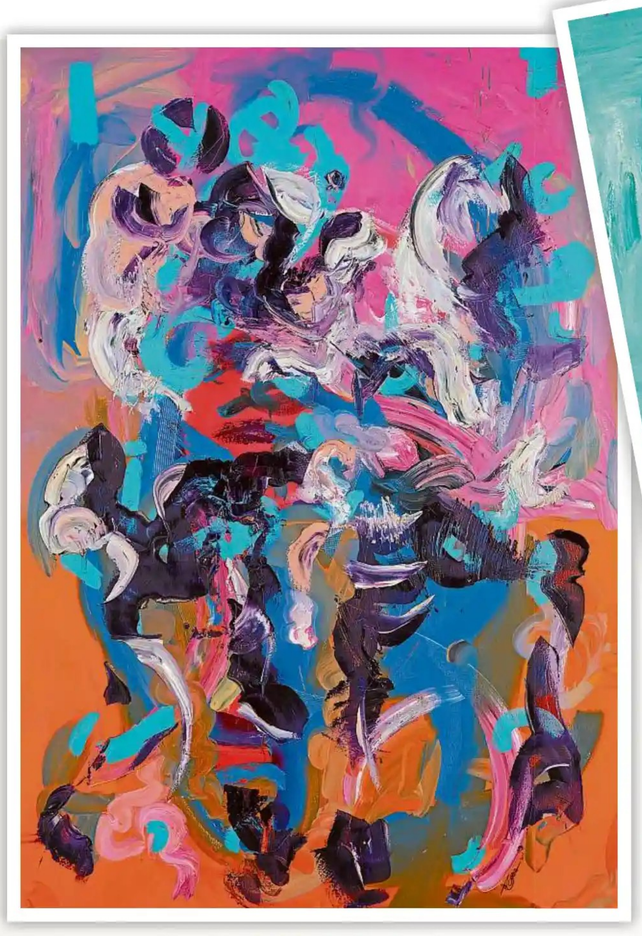
BIOHACK OF THE WEEK

- How about playing a soundtrack easily available on apps that helps you calm down? Most sleep apps provide a vast library of sounds.
- Meditation is known to help you fall asleep; guided meditation allows you to focus on your breathing and scan your own body, noticing sounds, feelings and your emotions.
- An important approach is boosting sleep hygiene. Sticking to a routine; going to bed and waking up at the same time helps in resetting your body clock. Also, switch off all sources of light and noise so there is no overstimulation. Ensure you have invested in the right mattresses and pillows.
- Have an early dinner and take a short walk — stretch and relax your muscles so all the stiffness goes away.
- Stay away from screens at least a couple of hours before you go to bed. The light from blue screens hampers sleep and will keep you buzzed the same way caffeine does. Also, avoid watching shows or reading news that may disturb you or trigger too many emotions.
- Do you overthink, feel anxious as thoughts keep swirling in your mind? Try journaling and clearing your mind before you try to sleep. Also, if you are unable to control your anxiety or worry loops, seek professional help.

*(***Biohack of the Week** *offers actionable tips to optimise your wellbeing.)*

ON THE PALETTE

**In a chat with Deepa Natarajan Lobo, celebrated multimedia artist, Raghava K K explores the evolving role of artists in a digital landscape driven by AI**



A few of Raghava's works.

# Embracing the edge of chaos

Life has truly come a full circle for Raghava KK, who began his career at Ashvita's in Chennai over two decades ago, and now returns to the space for his much-anticipated solo exhibition 'Figuring the Edge'. With this show, the celebrated artist, known for his multidisciplinary practice that spans painting, digital media, and technology-driven art, returns to the physical canvas, unveiling a series of abstract oil paintings that he calls "unphotographable". Delving deep into 'the Edge', a metaphor for identity and creativity, Raghava invites viewers to encounter his latest works in person rather than consume them through screens. *Excerpts from an interview*

**This is your first solo show in India in two decades...**

My journey began with Ashvin Rajagopalan at Ashvita's in Chennai in 2003, when both of us had just returned from New York — young, restless, and brimming with ideas. Our early shows were exciting and full of promise, and those memories remain vivid. After that, I spent nearly two decades in New York, exhibiting in India only occasionally, mostly in Mumbai. To return to the south now with a body of work I've been developing since 2020 feels deeply personal. It's my way of reinventing my relationship with painting itself. Life has, in every sense, come a full circle.

**'Figuring the Edge' is an intriguing title. What does it mean?**

I have always believed that artists play a vital role in pushing the boundaries of society. With that in mind, I have used 'the Edge' as a metaphor for transformation; a space where the lines between the inside and the outside blur and eventually collapse. If you look at some of the greatest movements in art, they have all emerged from the edge. This show explores that emotion: what does it feel like to live on the edge? What is the edge? How is the edge a powerful metaphor for movement, growth, transformation and change?

It also touches upon what happens when the edge becomes the centre, as we have seen with rap or grunge music, which began as a cultural phenomenon many decades ago and went on to become mainstream. As someone who believes he lives on the edge, I am giving the edge a form and attempting to figure it out myself.

**You call your works "unphotographable by design", with some even placed close to the floor. What inspired you?**

I wanted to create paintings that are like people. Sure, you can photograph a person and make him or her look good for any app. But it can never replace the original experience of meeting that person. Often, the closer you get to someone, the more you see their flaws, confusions and anxieties. These works are created to reflect this dynamic. They are constantly shifting as they are made with thick impasto layers, with the painting leaking onto the edges. This invites viewers to move around them and inspect them from different angles. The closer you come, the more chaos you will see.

**There's a lot of talk about AI "stealing" art or replacing artists. As someone who has been one of the first to use technology creatively, how do you view these controversies about originality and copyright?**

I think it's an exciting time. Sure, we can look at AI from an existing model and say, 'This is copyright infringement'. But if you are wise, you would also ask: 'Why does copyright exist in the first place? Does it make sense?' We only think about how man invented tools, but never about how the same tools also made man. For instance, I invented the pen, but how did the pen reinvent me? It gave me math and geometry, which in turn allowed me to create urban design and put me into boxes.

Raghava K K
PIC COURTESY: NIMISH JAIN

Any change to society, whether it's the pen or the printing press or AI, brings a loss of jobs, identity and originality. But it also brings along a sense of liberation and mystery. It opens up exciting new possibilities. The question then becomes, how do we want to grow? You can embrace the fact that you don't know who you are going to become and explore yourself beyond who you already are. 'The Edge' is like that; you don't know which side you are going to choose, and that's what makes it thrilling.

**Many young artists look up to you as a pioneer in digital and experimental art. What advice would you give them about staying original in a world full of algorithms and trends?**

Embrace loss, liberation, and mystery because this is not a winning or losing game; it's a growing one. Ask real questions, not the boring ones which are driven by loss or fear. Of course, those get attention and create headlines because our nervous system is wired to look for things that might go wrong. But when you develop a sense of curiosity, exploration and love, you rise above all that. Artists should keep reinventing themselves and learn to see the world through different eyes.

*'Figuring the Edge' is on view at Ashvita's, Chennai, till December 15.*

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Chitradurga: 9619033465, Kunigal: 8879046819,
Chikkaballapur: 9167082428, Chintamani: 8291927028
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Printed and published by B A Ravi on behalf of The Printers (Mysore) Private Ltd, at The Printers (Mysore) Private Ltd, Plot nos. 7-12, Kumbalgodu Industrial Area, Bengaluru - 560 074. Executive Editor: K V Subramanya (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act). Editorial Office: 75, M.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 001. E-mail: editor@deccanherald.co.in. Phone: 080-45557333, Editorial: 080-45557279/080-45557280, Circ: 080-45557204, Advt: 080-45557163/080-45557164. Also printed at Hubballi-Dharwad, Mangaluru, Kalaburagi, Davangere, Mysuru and Hosapete. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. RNI No 3608/57. Registered, Regn. No: KRNA/BGE/1027/2023-2025, posted at Bangalore PSO, Mysore Road, Bengaluru - 560 026. Website: www.printersmysore.com